The Mennonite Quarterly Review

VOLUME XXIII OCTOBER 1949 NUMBER FOUR

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EDITORIAL

WAS KIERKEGAARD ESSENTIALLY AN ANABAPTIST? The reading of the penetrating and thorough presentation in this issue of the essence of Kierkegaard's message by Professor W. Leendertz of the Mennonite Seminary in Amsterdam, Holland, one of the foremost continental authorities on Kierkegaard and a lifelong student of his writings, brought this insistent question to at least one person who both heard the original lectures of Professor Leendertz and pondered the written form of this scholarly presentation. Not that the mighty Dane was consciously in the Anabaptist tradition or had even the remotest historical connection with the Anabaptists, but that his fundamental critique of conventional Christianity and insistence upon personal fulfilment of Christian truth in life rather than in only intellectual or aesthetic experience —in other words true discipleship—is exactly what Anabaptism at its best and purest proclaimed. Anabaptism went further than Kierkegaard in the practical application of this vision in the creation of an actual Christian brotherhood and in a full break with conventional Christianity, thus being even more "existential" than Kierkegaard. It also went more into concrete detail in its application. But basically is it not the same understanding of Christ and the Gospel?

IN HIS HIGHLY INFORMATIVE SURVEY ARTICLE "West Prussian Mennonites Through the Centuries," Horst Penner, a young European Mennonite scholar, formerly of Danzig, now a schoolteacher in Bavaria, presents a companion piece to his earlier REVIEW article on the Mennonites of East Prussia. The tragic and absolute destruction in 1945 of the four hundred year old and once vigorous Mennonitism of the Vistula delta area around Danzig, which is the true Mother community of all the Mennonitism of Russia and in turn of large Mennonite areas in the United States, Canada, and all Mennonites in Latin America (Paraguay, Brazil, Uruguay) outside of the Mission Churches, calls for the writing of a definite history of this group. Dr. Penner almost alone survives out of a group of younger scholars working in this field who came to the fore in the decade before World War II. We devoutly hope that he with others who can round out the theological and ecclesiastical aspects of the history, will put themselves to this task. This is one of the remaining major uncompleted tasks of Mennonite historiography.

THERE ARE REFRESHING AND ENCOURAGING SIGNS of a genuine revival of nonresistance among the Mennonites of Europe where this principle was almost completely abandoned during the nineteenth century. The vigorous peace group in Holland is the most noteworthy of these. But the dry bones elsewhere are also taking on flesh. In the very place where nonresistance was the "deadest," in France there comes a new and powerful voice in the person of Pierre Widmer, a former army officer, now a leading elder among the French Mennonites, editor of the French Mennonite organ, *Christ Seul,* and conference evangelist. The REVIEW is happy to be able to present in this issue the story of Pierre Widmer's spiritual pilgrimage from military service to nonresistance. It is a moving account of a deeply sincere struggle with conscience and truth to come to the light, and thus constitutes a powerful testimony. Reprints of this article will be available for wider distribution.

CHRISTIAN PACIFISM IS A RELATIVELY MODERN DEVELOPMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. True, there have been witnesses to the peace teachings of the New Testament down through the centuries, and there have even been small groups in various periods who have been of special significance for the peace testimony. But only in our time has there been a definite focussed movement of any size in the main stream of Christendom. This movement has gone through the fiery trial of two world wars and faces further serious test in the current world situation. It is not unified in its theological basis nor its practical program. What will be its course in the future? This question is of vital interest to Mennonites who, while not an integral part of the modern pacifist movement, are in the true Biblical sense of the word, Christian pacifists. What is their relation to this movement? What is their distinctive position and contribution? Don Smucker, formerly an F.O.R. secretary, now a professor in the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago, addresses himself to these questions in his article "Whither Christian Pacifism?" While not intended to give a full discussion, particularly not of the Mennonite position, its keen analysis and critique of the ideological history and current dilemmas of the pacifist movement constitute a valuable contribution to the discussions now proceeding inside of the movement, as well as an aid to Mennonites in the clarification and deepening of their own convictions and contribution.

The Mennonite Quarterly Review

Vol. XXIII No. 4

SÖREN KIERKEGAARD: AN INTERPRETATION*

W. LEENDERTZ, *Amsterdam,* HOLLAND

I am not surprised that I have been asked to deliver a few lectures to you on Sören Kierkegaard, for in recent years his name has not only penetrated into America and his significance is not only realized by such Christian theologians as Reinhold Niebuhr, but also the philosophy of existence which may be traced back to Kierkegaard is no longer only a European problem, but has become a world problem. It is particularly the American scholar Lowrie who has made a thorough study of him, and by his books has made Kierkegaard known. Moreover, some of Kierkegaard's works are already accessible to you in English.

But it took a long time before people here took an interest in Kierkegaard, who died as long ago as 1855 in Copenhagen. It is easy to understand that this Dane, who wrote only in Danish, was not immediately known outside his own country, and even in Denmark his immense importance was not at once felt. His first work *Either-Or* was like a flash of lightning from a clear sky, and made immediately a deep impression, so that very soon a second edition was required. But when, a little later, he wrote his greatest philosophical work, it was unsalable. Thus like so many great men, his greatness was not recognized during his life. Like so many: Schopenhauer's most important work was taken to the

* A combination of two addresses delivered to the faculty and student body of Goshen College in September, 1948.

paper mill, and Nietzsche did not even know to whom he could offer his *Zarathustra* as a present. Even after his death Kierkegaard did not become known at once. In Denmark, it is true, he was considered one of the greatest men of letters, and people wrote earlier about him in Denmark than in other countries, but not until about 1880 did he become more generally known outside of Denmark, particularly in Germany. People began to wonder what was the meaning after all of these amazing literary works. Is it all autobiography? Why does he write such strange works? Is it to conceal or to reveal himself? Does he try in this way to understand himself more fully, and yet hide the essential thing from the reader? Or does he want to divulge to a very few something but by no means everything? He writes literary, religious, and philosophical works, but in all of them everything hinges on a few points, that is, on his relation to his father, or on a girl and a broken-off engagement—and we ask ourselves why does he connect his attitude in life, his religion and philosophy with such themes? And when I tell you presently *how* he writes about this, you will understand that at first people were placed before a psychological enigma, and wondered: does he write for himself primarily? Who was he, what was his aim, and what meaning have all these writings for him? Have they any value besides the personal note? That is, can they teach others anything? Do they deal with general problems or do they not? This is the first revival of interest, which we might characterize by the superscription: "Kierkegaard, the enigma."

These questions have not all been solved. The later works about him, such as those of Magnussen (1942), deal, for instance, with the question: what particular cross had Kierkegaard to bear, about which he continually wrote, even while at the same time he concealed it from the eyes of others? But on one point everyone does agree, namely, that what he gave was not merely of significance for himself but is of objective importance for everyone, in particular for every Christian.

So at first people occupied themselves with the typical religious personality in Kierkegaard and the religious conflict of the man himself, though they also saw that there was more in this than was merely personal. It seemed, however, as if this interest waned again. But about 1900 Kierkegaard came to the fore once more. His works had been translated into German, and people were no longer content as in the first revival with a few translated parts. Now it is the religious deepening which he brought that

becomes the point of interest. He is now seen as the preacher of the inwardness of the individual in his relation to God. To typify it again in one word: Kierkegaard preaches "the single individual." This was the time when social ideals, particularly through socialism, came to the fore; that the masses, and what was connected with the masses, asserted themselves; and that the impersonal newspapers became a power. And in those years, about 1900, Kierkegaard comes to the fore as a reaction: the single individual.

Some ten years later it was again another side of Kierkegaard which became typical of him, particularly in the Christian world; this is the aesthetic side. The word "aesthetic," which for him has an entirely different meaning from that in common usage, I will discuss fully later on. But except in that first time when psychological questions concerning Kierkegaard himself in connection with his writings in particular were considered, it was always Christian questions that presented themselves for discussion.

When thirty-five years ago I was writing a Dutch book on his fundamental religious and philosophical thought people said: "Kierkegaard is an author and he has written religious works, but from a theological point of view, he is of no particular value, and as regards philosophy, not at all." But not long after that the Swiss theologians Karl Barth and Emil Brunner became known, and both referred to Kierkegaard and wanted to build their work on the theological principles expressed by him. And since then there has not been a theologian but has felt the particular value of Kierkegaard for this theology. And his philosophy! Whatever philosophical book you may happen to take in hand, the name of Kierkegaard occurs in it. Not only Christian philosophy, but even philosophy that violently attacks the Christian faith such as that of J. P. Sartre, appeals to Kierkegaard.

Hence Karl Jaspers says that there are two figures in the nineteenth century that were long passed over in silence, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, but now steadily become more and more important, whose thoughts have created a new atmosphere and who now in our twentieth century engross the mind. The philosophy which now stands in the center of interest is the philosophy of existence, and Kierkegaard is its founder. He gave the word "existence" a new sense, and existence is now spoken about by everyone, in America also. But may I say at once that it is here often discussed in connection with J. P. Sartre, though he is by no means the only existentialist. Besides Sartre's atheistic existential philosophy, there are also other forms, including Christian ones. In short, the latest revival of

Kierkegaard is his philosophical revival, characterized by one word: "existential." When I add to this that Kierkegaard has also attracted attention in modern psychology, you will feel that we here have to deal with one of the very greatest of men, who reveals a new aspect to every succeeding age. Although for some such as Sartre the religious side of Kierkegaard may have lost its significance, the unprejudiced student who inquires into the significance of Kierkegaard for our day must set forth all the aspects mentioned. And that Kierkegaard lives is evident from the fact that he has now also been translated into English and French and that the Italian translation will soon appear, also that in Holland some of his works were already translated (though everyone in Holland can read the German translation), and that in Spain attention was drawn to him already by Unamuno. And yet for a real study of Kierkegaard it is necessary to have recourse to the Danish, for many translations, including the German, are not correct.

But then Kierkegaard is very difficult to translate, in spite of his splendid literary style, on account of his very unique way of expressing himself in a form full of play upon words. One must be fully conversant with all the fields that he covers to give an adequate translation of his works. In the second place, Kierkegaard's works have indeed been translated, but not his papers. Selected parts of them have been published in other languages, but for study these twenty large volumes (the twentieth is to appear in 1948) are indispensable. In them we find indications and explanations of very much that otherwise might be misunderstood.

Now it is my intention to deal not only with his religious and theological significance, but also with his conception of existence, which is on one side closely connected with his religion and theology, but which has also become a point of interest nowadays outside of Christianity.

First I must tell you about his life; not because it is customary to do so when discussing somebody's works, but because Kierkegaard's life is indissolubly connected with his thought. Without knowing his life, one cannot understand him, for his thoughts, like Nietzsche's, have a personal character. It is possible to speak about Kant without knowing anything about his life. It has been said, "the personal character of Kant's philosophy is that it is impersonal." With Hegel it is his system that is important, not Mr. Hegel himself. Of numerous thinkers we know very little and it does not matter. But with Kierkegaard it is just the opposite. He did not give a system, he gave himself. His external life is soon

told, but what matters is the inner life, which is closely connected with these few external facts. That inner life determines all his literary works.

What are the external events of Kierkegaard's life, between his birth in 1813 and his death in 1855? He had a father, who died, which happens in many lives. He fell in love with a girl, got betrothed, and broke off the engagement after a year, which does not happen too rarely either. He was ridiculed in a satirical paper, which does not occur to everyone, but which most people would not take to heart so much. The last fact of his life was in connection with a pompous funeral oration, such as may be heard at many a funeral. But these simple facts determine all his life and struggle.

About the death of his father he says that he lost an earthly father, but gained a father in heaven. His broken engagement started all his literary activity, and such important productions were the result that the famous Russian philosopher Sjestov feels justified in saying without exaggeration that Regine Olsen (this is the girl's name) was more important than the discovery of America. All that Kierkegaard writes turns on these two major points, his deceased father and his lost fiancée. To her he dedicates all his works. And when he has reached a final point, or as it appears, a pause, the caricatures in the "Korsar," as the paper which lampooned him was called, called forth a number of new productions. Finally the stilted words of Martensen at the grave of Bishop Mynster gave rise to his fierce attack on the Danish state church, in the midst of which conflict he suddenly died exhausted.

Now something more about his life, more particularly about his inner life. Sören Aabye Kierkegaard was born of elderly parents, of the second marriage of his father Michael Tedersen Kierkegaard and Anna Lund, the father's former housekeeper. His father was already fifty-six years and his mother forty-five years old. His mother, who died in 1834, had little influence on him; his father had so much the more, even a dominating influence. By him he was educated in phantasy and dialectics, but he also inherited his melancholy from his father. This affliction of his is worse than his bodily weakness, and with this melancholy he wrestles all his life, for he feels it as disease and sin. He must be able to conquer it in God's strength.

In 1830 Sören is entered as a student at the University of Copenhagen. He is going to study theology, but no serious study took place. His thoughts were monopolized by all kinds of subjects. He surrendered himself entirely to the free and easy life of the

students but it did not satisfy him. There are moments, and they are deeper decisive ones, when this makes itself felt, and in which he seeks the truth, which is truth *to him,* the idea for which he can live and die. He tries to find the archimedical point for his life. But something happened through which the serious side of his nature spoke very urgently to him. He speaks of "the great earthquake" in 1835. This overthrew as it were his light easy life. What was this? It has been thought that his father initiated him into the sin of his youth, when as a poor boy he tended the sheep and in cold and hunger cursed God. Others have thought of his father's later sin, his faithlessness toward his first wife, and that already a few months after her death he had to marry his housekeeper, Sören's mother. In any case the student Sören, who honored his father above everything, but vexed him by his irregular study, became acquainted with the dark sin which reigned in his father's life. Now the son naturally sees the beloved father in another light, and sees a curse in his father's later wealth. In his later works this theme often occurs, especially in "Solomon's dream." But by the side of the dark moments in his university life there was also a radiant moment, something to which, like the Psalmist of the Old Testament, he could look back in later times.

He always sees his university time as a black time, also because of that connection with his father's sin. But from that same time a short note has been recorded which reminds me of the memorial of Pascal, also with hour and date, as the moment to which he always could have recourse. At ten-thirty in the morning of the nineteenth of May, 1838 (the time is mentioned), Sören Kierkegaard writes: "There is an inexpressible joy which pervades us as inexplicably as the effusion of the apostle appears without evident motive: 'Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice.' Not a joy about something or other but the exclamation with tongue and mouth and from the bottom of the heart. I rejoice through my joy, from, in, with, on, through, and with my joy —a heavenly refrain, which abruptly cuts off our further song, a joy that cools and refreshes like a gust of wind, a gust of the trade wind, which blows from the wood of Mamre to the eternal mansions."

Here there is something of a direct interference of God; here the religion breaks through. Now he wants inwardly to get into connection with Christianity, and he feels that so far he has borne the cross of Christ only outwardly, like Simon of Cyrene. The strained relation between his father and himself on account of his

not passing his examinations, changes, and when shortly after his father dies in August, he can say that he lost an earthly father but gained a father in heaven. Since then the tie with his father is closer than when his father lived.

Of no less significance than the father was for him his betrothal and the breach with Regine Olsen in 1840-1841. In 1849 Kierkegaard himself writes her: "Be assured that there is not a girl in Denmark, absolutely none, of whom will be said as certainly as of you: her life had an exceptional significance." And I said already that Sjestov thought her more important than the discovery of America. Why? Because she led Kierkegaard to discover spiritual worlds which are of eternal importance. And now you see already that his life was not a multitude of external events, but the history of a soul, the puzzle of which many have tried to solve. Why did he leave her? She was a young and merry girl; he felt old and melancholic. She was bright and full of life; he wrestled with religion and oppressive religious questions; could he initiate her into them? Was he fit for marriage, or was he a typically lonely, an exceptional character? He felt himself as one who must do penance, also for his past; a thorn in the flesh was given him. Does this not render a marriage impossible? Yes, the whole story of his betrothal is wrapped in riddles—but how must he make her understand that she must break off the engagement? Breaking off an engagement was considered to be a very serious affair in those days. When she refuses to do so, and becomes more and more devoted to him, he tries to make himself impossible to her, and however painful it may be to him, however much he suffers, he acts a part, he pretends to be another than he is, that she may take back her word. At last, when it is all no use he sends the ring back to her. The breach is a fact; he pretends to be indifferent, but all his life his love for her remains undiminished. She says that it will be her death, but soon after she becomes engaged to Schlegel, and Kierkegaard mourns and expiates, and all his life he grapples with the question whether it was after all right to leave her, whether if he had had faith he would have stayed with her. I said that from this fact started all his literary activity. Otto Weiniger has said: "Great men speak and write only about themselves." This applies to a great extent to Kierkegaard. Though he always conceals himself, he must reveal himself; that is why he writes. He always speaks about what another prefers to hide. When expiating he confesses. He always refers to those dark places in his life; he always speaks of his father, his fiancée, of the thorn in his flesh. And yet he does not

tell his inmost thought; he never gives the key but takes it with him into the grave, that nobody may understand that thorn. It is not only the poetic necessity to pour forth the inward things and to find liberation. "No," he says, "Goethe did so and so gave utterance to everything in order to be rid of it. Goethe freed himself by his poems, but I involve myself by mine, that is, involve myself in guilt." You will feel that if by the outer life we are helped to understand the inner life, it is necessary to know that to understand Kierkegaard's works. At the same time we soon learn that we are confronted by insoluble difficulties, unless we are satisfied with a cheap solution, and that hence we should observe great reserve and diffidence toward the absolutely personal secret.

What I have just given you out of Kierkegaard's biography concerns only his earlier life when he was becoming a man, but I believe that what is decisive in life takes place in these years, not only for Kierkegaard, but for everyone, particularly as regards the thought life. Modern psychology places the most important and often decisive years early in childhood, and this is right. We see this also in Kierkegaard, when we consider that as a small boy he was educated by his father. But I should say: in infancy the basis is laid for possibilities, and as a rule a worldly man mostly becomes what was then put into him; but the man who knows God's demands does not say: "I was made like this," but asks himself: "May I accept this; what does God want me to be?" And then follows the severe struggle whether one will or will not accept his nature and his possibilities, the decision of which comes in the later years. Kierkegaard never accepted his melancholy nor the thorn in his flesh as being his nature. With this he wrestled; all his works testify to this, and in this struggle he set forth special aspects of the world of God which are of importance in all times.

But before I speak about Kierkegaard's works, let me first say something about his further life. Strictly speaking, this is the sheer history of a soul, for Kierkegaard not only remained unmarried, he also remained without any official employment. He became no minister; the only thing he did was to write. He took, indeed, some recreation; he often took a drive in a carriage, he walked much in Copenhagen, he visited the theater; but mostly he was at his desk. This life was very lonely, but full of thought. And when he walked through Copenhagen he seemed to everyone to be a very peculiar figure. When at a given moment his literary activity reached a final point, he thought of becoming a minister, but it did not take place, and just at that time a new conflict arose. Kierkegaard always

lived outside reality, but the few times that he came into contact with it, it became a conflict. There was the scurrilous *Korsar,* which ridiculed everybody. This irritated Kierkegaard. He wrote: "Let them ridicule me, for I seem to enjoy the honor of being excepted." He was taken at his word, but this vexed him too much so that he actually suffered from it. And again this suffering became a source from which sprang many writings, although they were writings in which very strict Christian demands were laid down, to which demands he felt that the church did not respond.

The church was represented by the figure of Bishop Mynster, the honored confessor of Kierkegaard's father. Sören hoped that Mynster would concur with his conception of what was really Christian. But Mynster kept silent and died. At his funeral he was exalted by Martensen as the true Christian (I will not relate the conflict in all its details), whereas Kierkegaard saw in him the type of worldly Christianity. Now Kierkegaard starts fulminating against existing Christendom, against the church as it is, to contrast it with primitive New Testamental Christianity. Fiercer and fiercer become the attacks in his leaflets under the title, "The Instant"; suddenly he breaks down and in a few days dies in the hospital.

So he lived a typical author's and thinker's life, different from other people who must have paid employment; he could do so because of the fortune which his father had left him, but which he completely spent, so that at his death there was nothing left. His end is remarkable. Spiritually he has come to a final point; as an author he has covered a long way, and there is no sequence possible any more. And at the same time his body is utterly exhausted, he is quite powerless, and financially he has no income for subsistence left. It is as if God has used him for what He wanted to use him and at the same time has perfectly used him up.

As I now proceed to speak about Kierkegaard's works, which are composed in such a romantically peculiar fashion that some guidance is necessary for a correct interpretation, I must go back to his student period. I said already that his works cannot be understood without his life. Whether Newton or Boule were melancholy or whether they broke off an engagement is of no importance whatever as regards understanding their works, but Kierkegaard writes about his spiritual struggle. Like Nietzsche he only speaks about his victories, hence he writes after the battle has been fought; he writes about what lies behind him, over which he has triumphed. And what Nietzsche says about his own works applies also to Kierkegaard: They have been written with blood. Hence, what

he describes, he is not, but *was*. He is always on his way toward further things, but only a few sentences refer to this, for the real thing is not expressed for the present. Why does he do so? This is his pedagogy.

I now come to a point that makes reading Kierkegaard so difficult for many, especially for those who only read bits here and there, or read selected parts. All his many books truly form a whole, so that you must know the place of what you read in that whole, else you will misunderstand it. But before I communicate something of this complicated whole, I must first make some preliminary remarks which have to do with this problem. Kierkegaard desires to draw the reader's attention to Christianity, and his pedagogy consists in this that he first places himself on the spot where the other stands, to lead him then gradually from that spot to Christianity. So he covers a long way, at the end of which you stand before Christianity. How he walks this way (i.e., his method), I will discuss later.

But when one walks on a way, one is at any time at a certain point and speaks about this, and not yet about what follows. And since he wants to impress that one point upon his readers he does not speak of all kinds of other matters, but says one thing with single-minded emphasis, for when you show also other aspects, you detract from the impression made. Thus Kierkegaard left many things unsaid for the present. He was then accused of being blind to something or other, since the many other things were not given their due. In his diary he complains that people think that he does not know the other side, or does not take it into account, that for instance he had no eye for the social side, but as an answer declares: *First* I must say this one thing, then I can go further. But when one at once passes on, one rushes past the first thing, and one should stop to consider it. First the personal side should be properly dealt with, then follows the social side. He who directly passes on to the latter rushes past himself.

This analysis, of course, relates to Kierkegaard's slowly progressing literary procedure. Where another, he says, needs one sentence, I need a book. Every book is a step further. Here again the pedagogic method of Kierkegaard must be kept in mind; the reader himself must *take* a step from one thing to another. Taken together all the works form a whole; beginning and end lie very far apart and not in the same book. Step by step he moves on slowly, for Kierkegaard is afraid that the reader is so eager to arrive at the end too soon, that he will not really reach it, but rather, as it

were, will seize the end by theft when he is not yet ripe for it. "Everyone," he says, "has made everything easy at present. It is my task to make difficulties." This holds, according to him, particularly with regard to Christianity; people think they can easily flee to grace; hence he would lead us to the foot of the altar in such way that when we come there, we are really there. His way for this is to lead us through the gate of consciousness of sin so that we truly avail ourselves of grace.

In close relation with this is his indirect manner of communication. We shall see later that this is of great importance for Kierkegaard, but must note here already that the essential thing for him is the real Christian message. If you state this directly, so to say blurt it out, one of your hearers says "no" and passes on, and another says to the familiar words, "yes, certainly, that is true," and also passes on, for he has known this a long time. You must lead each one slowly to realize that he must understand the message as spoken to *him*. The problem regarding direct or indirect communication is exceedingly complicated. It is complicated in a different sense, also, namely, in the sense that the most important thing can often not be stated directly. A systematist lays down his foundations, and builds on them; for us it is then rather easy to discover what the groundwork is, for the essential thing is in any case said; anything that is of real importance for the thought of the writer must be expressed, else the building is not sound; all the building stones are piled up by him in regular succession. And that building in itself can be examined and criticized.

But with Kierkegaard, just as with Nietzsche, it is entirely different. You cannot take what they wrote, *per se*. In no sense do they give us a system; they do not want to build up a system, for they consider this to be impossible. They are combating the spiritual powers of their age, which have, of course, also influenced them, but which they wish to banish. They need not react to that which need not be opposed as not being of importance to them. Hence that which is given to us out of their sphere of thought in their writings is only a part which needs a complement, which is not pronounced but which we have to supply, and this we must do, not because of the ultimate end to which they want to lead us, but because the stress is so enormously laid on the one side that the complementary part seems to vanish entirely. And this stress is so one-sided because they are in a battle in which they are reacting to the other side. *Why* are they in reaction, and why must we therefore understand them for a great deal from the counterpart?

Because the spiritual powers which they combat were suppressing something very vital. This they want to save. But what must be saved and guarded is often hidden as in a deep stronghold in a fortress and we only see the fight on top of the walls. Kierkegaard wants to be a strategist, and he designs a strategic plan. He is a thorough pedagogue, but he also knows himself; hence he knows his place: that his task is only to be a corrective. A correction premises the thing that should be corrected, and is always one-sided. Kierkegaard knows this and calls his work purposely and consciously one-sided; that is to say, there lives also something else in him, and his work should be supplemented to be normative. But this one-sidedness is necessary. At the top of many of his papers he has put *Nota bene!* He even declares: I *am* a *nota bene!;* not a principal clause but a subordinate clause; not a substantive but an adjective.

Such writers should be read with circumspection; no conclusions should be drawn from a quotation chosen at random. We should never pass judgment before we have followed the long road to the end. We must not only mark what the author says but also what he does not say, and particularly note the indications which he himself gives in his prefaces and in the last sentences of every book, and also what he adds in his papers.

Unintentionally, I have already told something about Kierkegaard's writings, only vaguely hinting that they are composed with a plan which makes them form a whole. I will now discuss this further. Already I have told you that the plan of his works and the method used had a personal motif. All three, the method, the plan or the structure of the works, and his life are closely related. In his life an inner event brings the decision, for after the breach with Regine Olsen in 1841 he lives, properly speaking, as a hermit; he himself says as in a monastery. Now we ask the question—and this is decisive for our view of the method and the structure of the whole—was there from his early life until his death a continued growth, an evolution toward Christianity, or was this already at the beginning his conviction, and is the whole structure of his works a conscious pedagogic device leading to it? In 1849 Kierkegaard himself tried to convince us of the latter in his "point of view" with regard to his literary work. But many hold the view that the Christian motif was not yet present at the beginning, certainly not when he wrote *Either-Or* in 1843, which starts the avalanche of his production. People said that this was not an *incognito* of the religious spirit, but that he only gradually came to the religious and Christian conviction.

I think that it clearly appears from his papers that the basic decision had already come in principle before his literary productions began, and that in its main lines this viewpoint is of particular significance for the understanding and the structure of his works. From the notes written down when he was a student, at which time the great crisis occurred, we may infer from what, how, and to what he developed. About this life and the significance of his father and the latter's death I will be silent here, since I have already told you something about it. But it was at this time that he came into contact with the spiritual powers which carried him along and against which he rebelled. These spiritual powers determine all his later thoughts atnd his whole struggle. They were romanticism, Hegel, and Socrates. But there had also been something else in his life: Christianity. Later on Kierkegaard declares that humanly speaking his father had educated him insanely, because he had caused Sören already in his infancy to overstrain himself with impressions which a deeply melancholy old man laid upon him, while the old man himself succumbed to them.

This was the impression of Christianity. Old Mr. Kierkegaard did not tell about a babe in the manger in Bethlehem; he painted only the crucified one, with whom alone there is salvation for sinners, and who asks absolute obedience from all who are His. And since Sören was overstrained by this, he refused to accept this Christianity—though it held him fast. The faith of his childhood remained, indeed, in his mind, but it did not reign in his heart. He knows that Christianity is redemption through Christ; it is a radical life, but he recoils from it. He goes entirely adrift; later on he paints that time in dark colors. His fantasy, in which his father had trained him, drives him to romanticism, the free, untrammeled life outside reality; and the dialectics, in which his father had also trained him, drives him to speculation, that is to the idealism of Hegel, the philosophy that also leads far away from concrete actual life, in which everything is dissolved into the Idea. But I told you already about the religious outbreak in 1838. The two spiritual powers are opposed by a religious event. Now he starts on a road at the end of which he sees a church. Christianity is for him a certainty, even Christianity in the form in which he received it from his father. Christianity is not the problem to him, but how to become a Christian. This is typical for him personally, but also for him as an author. He has no doubts about what Christianity is, or as he will say later, the New Testament; he is not at all critical with regard to this. His dogmatic interest is remarkably slight.

What he feels critical about is man, particularly his own soul as regards accepting Christianity. Thus the central question of his chief philosophical work, which he wrote under the pseudonym of Johannes Climacus, does not inquire into the truth of Christianity, but into the attitude of the individual towards Christianity. He typically expresses this in the following words: "I, Johannes Climacus, born in this town, now thirty years old, quite an ordinary man like most, I assume that for me as well as for a servant girl and for a professor there is a highest good, which is called eternal bliss; I have heard that Christianity gives this highest good, now I ask how do I come into connection with that doctrine."

What he wants to reach is, therefore, to come into relation with Christianity. His father's death pushed him in that direction, and the breach with his betrothed already mentioned will greatly intensify this question, which will hold him fast till his death.

The conflict with romanticism and speculation has started in his soul. Later on we will show what they were for him, but already in his student days a third power arrives: Socrates, the simple sage of antiquity. To him he devotes his thesis for the doctorate. Greater and greater will become the influence of this Greek philosopher. He feels affinity with Socrates' irony; he makes Socrates' method his, particularly in his conflict with romanticism and speculation. But Socrates is no Christian; hence he wants to rise above Socrates, and more and more he will contrast the Socratic and the Christian principle, though Socrates always remains for him the honored philosopher. And yet, Kierkegaard remains romantic to the end, and Hegel's influence can also be pointed out, though he wants to banish it. However much he overcomes them materially, formally he remains bound to them. A man always opposes most violently what lives within himself. Kierkegaard is romantic in the whole intricate structure of his works, in the design of pseudonyms against each other; often the tone also is romantic, the extremes that he loves, the personal way of writing. Nor is the speculation, especially Hegel, to be understood without romanticism, and though he fiercely combats Hegel, and especially his Danish followers, how much is he himself given to speculation! He who hates the system, he who thinks all systems reprehensible, and thinks so typically unsystematically himself, builds up his books into one great well-constructed system.

But what puts him in opposition to these powers is Christianity, which had taken possession of him. Now he not only knows that Christianity brings salvation but that salvation is also for him. But

then everything whatever must be dominated by Christ: all his inclinations, all his thoughts, his whole being.

I tell you this at such length to make you feel that Kierkegaard did not gradually pass from romanticism and speculation to Christianity, but that behind his first works, in spite of all semblance of the contrary, stands a religious, nay a Christian man, even though for a long time he does not dare call himself a Christian, which however is also on pedagogic grounds. His own time did not recognize this. It got the impression that the brilliant poet became a Christian later on. But he himself gives the explanation, which has often been doubted but is corroborated by notes written down in the time before his literary productions, which is this: the writer is a religious writer from the very first, who strives after a religious end, and all his aestheticism is ejection in a Socratic method, for he has a goal to achieve with his literary productions. It was not only to become a Christian himself that he combated these spiritual powers. The progress in his works, he himself says later, is back from aestheticism toward Christianity, and back from the system, the speculation, to Christianity. It moves from the complicated toward the simple. The way, which for himself was *the* way, or rather which he had to walk repeatedly, was also the way for his time, which had surrendered to both powers.

When he tells how he accomplished his plan, he makes it apparent that he was a religious author from the outset, for he says that by the side of his pseudonymous aesthetic works he published simultaneously edifying discourses under his own name. And when he speaks about his plan, he always lays great stress on God's guidance, which directed him in that way.

Closely connected with his plan is his method. I will be brief about this. Kierkegaard wants to bring his reader from something to something. How can this be done? Can one just start preaching Christianity? Most preachers do so, but it is no use; one does not reach the other. No, if you want to help somebody and lead him to something, you must first go and stand at the place where the other stands. This is the Socratic principle, of Socrates, whom he calls *his* master, but he adds immediately that he had believed and still believed in One, in the Lord Jesus Christ. But the method to come to this belief is the Socratic one. Socrates only wanted to be midwife, helping the other to giving birth to his own thoughts.

Thus Kierkegaard does not preach directly, but helps people to find Christianity themselves, or rather helps them to find themselves. For this reason he writes pseudonymously. The author is

to have no authority; he is not to stand between the reader and his subject. The pseudonym Victor Eremika writes, or rather edits the papers of another and calls his book *Either-Or.* In his papers Kierkegaard says: "The book is not called *Either-Or,* but it is an either-or. The reader must choose here between two spiritual attitudes, between the aesthetic and the ethic attitude." Then follows a long series of aesthetic writings: *Fear and Trembling, Repetition, Philosophical Fragments, The Concept of Dread, Prefaces, Stages on Life's Way.* The end in view is always to lead the readers to discover themselves, and then to draw their attention to Christianity. They must first realize that they live in the aesthetic, but that this leads to despair. They must have found out that the way they went leads nowhere, then they turn round, and are prepared to have an open eye for Christianity.

So consistent is his method that he not only attempts in his books to lead people from the perfectly worldly standpoint to the foot of the altar, and so to the heart of Christianity, but he entirely adapts his life to his aesthetical works in order to have the standpoint of his readers. These works were devoured, but the *Edifying Discourses,* which were published at the same time, were read but little. In the latter there is an ascending line upward to the perfectly Christian point of view, and for this reason he also calls them *Christian Discourses.* When at last in 1846 he has reached the truly Christian attitude, he himself appears as editor, although the writer remains as a pseudonym, that is Climacus. But after the conflict with the *Korsar* a second pseudonymous series written by Anticlimacus follows in which he depicts Christianity in all its rigor, exalted to its ideal height, to which he feels he cannot rise. I am thinking of *Training in Christianity* and *The Sickness Unto Death.* But now he wants to show that he, the religious writer, who besides these books also gives many edifying and Christian discourses, is the same as at the beginning, and he writes a short aesthetic booklet on an actress.

These aesthetic works are for himself also a freeing of himself. He wants to get rid of aestheticism, wants to banish it from his life. But as far as the reader is concerned, it is a method. He describes attitudes in life which he has partly or altogether surmounted, though in his pseudonyms he pursues these aspects of life to the very end. It will be clear that one cannot cite from these works here and there as if that were Kierkegaard's opinion, for of many citations he would say: that is what I wanted to combat. But it is indirect opposition, that is, from the inside out. He makes

people walk a way that leads nowhere so that they may choose another way. So he calls his literary labor a pious deceit in the service of Christianity, and also an attack from behind. This indirect method should not be applied everywhere and always, certainly not where Christianity is unknown. The apostles and also missionaries to the heathen should preach directly. But in Christendom, where everybody considers himself a Christian, there the question is the real attitude toward Christianity; there one should attack from behind so that people may learn to discover Christianity.

I will not describe the progress in his books in connection with his life and what occasioned his outburst against the state church after he had preached Christianity in all its vigor, for there is an American book about this, *A Short Life of Kierkegaard* by Walter Lowrie (1946), in which all this is described. I prefer to tell you something about the contents and significance of his works. What I have told you thus far was necessary so as not to misunderstand these works.

In order to bring forward some of his central thoughts, I wish to present Kierkegaard in the light of the last revival of interest in him, that is the philosophic revival, in which existence is the main point of interest. But you should not think that I only wish to discuss a philosophical question, which at present is in the fore everywhere. No, when we speak about Kierkegaard in this connection, we cannot disregard the religious point of view.

"To exist" is not only a term much used nowadays in philosophical and theological books, like "existence" and "existential," but it is also a term that is often misunderstood because we also use this word in everyday speech, where it has another meaning, hence the confusion. The word existence has, indeed, a very old tradition. In the middle ages it was used in contradistinction to essence. Existence meant being, *that* something is, and essence meant *what* something is. Existence could be applied to everything, to things, to men, and to God, to everything material and spiritual and mental, hence exactly as this still occurs in everyday speech. A rose and a table exist; man and God exist just as an idea. But Kierkegaard gave the word a new meaning. Unfortunately he did not always adhere to it, and here and there he also uses it in the old sense. It is very easy to understand this, for on this usage rests an old and venerable tradition and it is difficult to detach oneself from this. But when Kierkegaard gives it a new meaning (and this new sense governs the modern conception of the philosophy of existence), I would

first of all characterize this meaning negatively and say: "to exist" is not "to be" and philosophy of existence is not a philosophy of being. It is not "being," though it has something to do with it, for if you are not, you cannot exist. It is not life either, although life in the deeper sense is closely akin to it, and a man who does not live cannot "exist."

What does Kierkegaard mean by it exactly? It is noteworthy that he never gives a definition of it, although he continually speaks about it in his "Proscript." He did not do so, for then it would become knowledge, a conception about which people would start philosophizing, and this would divert people from existence itself. Hence he does not give a system of existence; rather he has in view what he calls the dialectics with reference to existence; the point for him is a spiritual movement. Hence he does not think *about* existence, about what it is like, as Heidegger, for instance, does, but *out of* existence. He does not want to explain, but to lead himself and the reader to exist. From this you will feel that it is something else than "to be," and also that Kierkegaard is different from those who nowadays are called philosophers of existence, for the latter are bent on defining what existence really is. I should, therefore, wish to call Kierkegaard an existential philosopher, who philosophizes "from out of" and not "about" existence.

Since Kierkegaard does not give a definition of "existence" himself, we must try to find its characteristic traits here and there in the writings. As a first characteristic, which has been of great influence on modern conceptions such as those of Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel, and Sartre, I should like to mention: existence and existing refer only to human beings. What is above or below man does not exist; so a dog or a table does not exist. Here you feel the great difference from the old philosophical usage and from popular speech. Kierkegaard is merely consistent when he says (which may startle you for a moment), "God does not exist," but immediately adds, "God is eternal." His consistency goes even further. He declares: "There is one moment at which God does exist, that is when God entered into existence, when God became one human individual." For Kierkegaard existing is not being man in general, but being a particular man, or strictly speaking, it is the concrete expression of the human way of being. Kierkegaard speaks first of existing and those who exist, and afterward and in connection with this of their existence and existence in general, but it must not become a conception.

Accordingly man exists whether he wants to or not; he is an individual man, a concrete subject and not an abstraction as in speculation; only in philosophical distraction can this be forgotten. To exist is first of all to be a particular individual. One is so, but one must become conscious of this; not until this happens is the existing real. "Existing" must therefore become an inward deed, a conscious attitude of the concrete subject, a decision of the total human being, whose will, feeling, and thoughts are concerned. It is a responsible choice. Hence there is a task in the "existing," a step must be taken, one must become a "self," one must choose oneself, that is, one's deepest self. What is required is a personal decision of the man as totality, so he must become a "self."

When he who becomes a self reflects about something, he must be concerned in it; then it is existential reflection, and it becomes what Kierkegaard calls "genuine knowledge." Mathematics and science give "unreal knowledge," for there my personality is not concerned; they are objective and the same for everybody. But the matter is entirely different with regard to life and religion; here our "existence" is concerned.

This conception of Kierkegaard's has had a great influence on the Swiss theologians Barth and Brunner. But it has also influenced German philosophers, particularly Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers. For them also man is the central point in their philosophy of existence. Just so is it for the French existential philosophers, of whom I mention only two, who are in other respects diametrically opposed to Kierkegaard—Gabriel Marcel, the Catholic thinker, and the atheist, J. P. Sartre.

Yet there is a great difference between these other philosophers and Kierkegaard. In contrast to Kierkegaard, who concentrates on the attitude of life, Heidegger tries to draw up an analysis of what is the essential structure of human existence. He asks what are the elements of human existence, whereas Kierkegaard refuses to philosophize about it, for this would only prevent him from making the existential choice. Heidegger is indifferent to this; he gives an ontology. Jaspers goes more in Kierkegaard's direction. To him philosophizing is being concerned about oneself. For him the question is not, what one thinks about "being," but how one forms oneself in his "being." Of the French thinkers mentioned Sartre concurs with Heidegger, but he also gives moral thoughts in his novels, and thinks he can build them on his theory of existence. Heidegger only analyzes. Sartre analyzes, but he also preaches. These two philosophers have this in common that they know only finite man, who is

cast into the world and is hemmed in time. Kierkegaard knows what transcends this man, as does Marcel also.

But I return to Kierkegaard, who requires a personal decision. But what step should one take, what decision should one make? Now Kierkegaard starts experimenting and considers all the existential possibilities, the different attitudes of life or "stages of life," as he calls them. When he now reviews once more his original writing on human "existence relations," it is to define the qualitative differences, that one may not think in another category than that in which one lives. When he draws attention to Christianity, he wishes not only to distinguish the existence spheres, but also to make us realize that the "aesthetic man" runs his head against a wall, so that essentially his attitude of life is desperation; nor does the "ethical man" find the "self" in reality.

But I have already mentioned a contradistinction, which has rendered Kierkegaard famous. In his pseudonymous figures the aesthetic and the ethical man are put on the stage, and are contrasted. The word "aesthetic" may be misleading, being used in another sense in familiar speech, namely, that relating to the sphere of the beautiful. Is not aesthetics the doctrine of beauty? But Kierkegaard has introduced this term for an *attitude toward* life, not a *view about* life. You feel it is here not the question of contemplation, of thinking about life, but of our concrete actual attitude. What now does Kierkegaard describe in this contradistinction, and whom does he fight against? I said already earlier: the two powers, which had first carried him along, but which he later combated, were romanticism and speculation, represented in Hegel. These two, especially the first, are set by Kierkegaard in opposition to each other in a Socratic way; that is to say, he makes them speak for themselves, he places himself at their place, to show that they come to nothing. Then he points to Christianity, which is the alternative, but into which the powers had forced their way and from which they must be expelled. The aesthetic attitude of life is typically clear in the sensual element, that is romanticism, and in the ideal element, that is speculation.

Now let me elucidate to you in particular the former. If I should discuss the latter, that is aestheticism as speculation, this would lead me into the heart of his philosophy and the Hegelian philosophy, and I fear that I should have to presuppose too much. Still I will tell you this that the essential thing is the same: both romanticism and Hegel are an escape from concrete reality. We shall also see this presently when Kierkegaard warns against the

penetration of aestheticism into Christianity. But I refrain from discussing the typical philosophic significance of Kierkegaard here, although his great importance exactly in this respect is being emphasized everywhere at present.

I now want to discuss the practical attitude of life, which Kierkegaard also describes in his aestheticism. Aesthetic is the man who in his unrestrained immediacy will "enjoy" things, will let himself go. He has not a solid core within him, there is no continuity; he only seeks the present moment. It is especially the immediacy of the natural life to which Kierkegaard refers. The aesthetic man's life evaporates into a multitude of moods, which must, to be sure, render his life interesting. He lives of the accidental, is nothing in himself, but only in relation to other things; thus he is a multiformity, no unity. He has no definite task; everything is a possibility. His life is arbitrariness. He always savors life. The stronger, the more interesting his mood is, the more enjoyable. Sorrow will he taste, and love. But in love, too, there is no continuity; it is eroticism. He lives in possibilities, in dream and fantasy, loses his grasp on reality. He just wants to rise above reality, that is, in fantasy. Everything becomes a toying; his whole life becomes a sport. Also his thinking is in fantasy, outside reality. (You will recognize that here I am referring to the idealism of Hegel.) Life will be enjoyed. He passes on through life, but binds himself to nothing; he cannot do so, for there is no "self"; the binding power, the personality, is lacking; it has been dissolved into the multiformity.

I give you here only a few characteristics; there are more which lie in another direction. Intentionally I will not mention them, but will illustrate what I have said by an example. In his *Either-Or* Kierkegaard gives a sketch called "Convertible Husbandry." There you find an outline of this aesthetic attitude of life, of course an extreme one. The pseudonymous author starts from the thought that boredom is at the root of all evil. This can only be annihilated by amusement, and so as a remedy the convertible husbandry is recommended. This change of method of procedure and customs must lie within the general rule of the relation of remembering and forgetting. These two one should be able to control (you will feel here that aestheticism is also a choice and an existential attitude of life); hope is thrown overboard and in order to be able really to forget, this maxim of life is: admire nothing. If one can control remembering and forgetting, then one can play shuttlecock with all that exists. Then the point is not to get entangled in any relations

in life; no friendship—mix with people, but see to it that you can break off the intercourse at any moment; no marriage—forever, but only, say, until Easter. Friendship is dangerous, marriage even much worse for freedom. There are, indeed, examples such as the gypsy woman who carried her husband on her back through life, but for one thing this is rare, and on the other hand in the long run it is tiring—for the man. No marriage, but eroticism, which has poetic infinity but which can just as well be limited by one hour as by a month. Again, no profession or employment, for this also hampers freedom. Yet one should not be idle; one should divert oneself with unpaid arts. In order to be able to live in such a way, one should be able to control one's moods. The secret to reach this is arbitrariness. Then the things are not enjoyed directly, but through something else which one arbitrarily lays in them, and one sees all that exists from this point of view. For instance, at a philosophical discourse one should not pay attention to the contents, but to a drop of perspiration running over the speaker's forehead. One should constantly direct one's eye to something else—and what a rich source of enjoyment!

This is an example of the aesthetic attitude toward life. You may perhaps recall now that I said before that what was typical for it was immediacy, whereas here what is enjoyed is not the immediate thing. But here Kierkegaard draws the consequence, the over-refinement. In the "Diary of the Seducer" he will portray to us the figure of far-pushed subtlety. Numerous examples might be mentioned of less conscious and less consistent cases, where the mood is the central point, where the soul sways to and from to the music, which is also important for romanticism and aestheticism. But I mentioned this because here arbitrariness is the motto, and this is a choice by the person, though the binding of the personality is lacking, though he is not a "self." It is here the question of a choice between the aesthetic and the ethical life, where the decided choice becomes the important thing.

I said before that in existence as Kierkegaard conceived it, the central point is the responsible choice by the total personality, in which a man chooses himself and is resolved to become a "self." In the aesthetic stage the main point was actually also a choice, but it was all arbitrary. Many a time it was an escape from the decided choice and responsibility, often for fear. But in the ethical stage a man does not shrink from the choice, from the decision which binds and for which one feels responsible. We shall see later that the religious standpoint stands higher than the ethical, though it

is often mixed with ethical elements. In the specifically religious standpoint the main point is again the choice of oneself, but then it is the choice for God.

It will appear that the religious attitude is the only thing that is significant for Kierkegaard; therefore I will be brief about the ethical stage. In contrast to aestheticism, where one is what one is, Kierkegaard places the ethical standpoint, where one must become something, where everything does not go without effort, as it does in aestheticism. Here the individual must choose himself in his eternal significance. In opposition to romantic eroticism he places marriage, which rests on a decision. The individual does not wish to be the artistic exception, but must achieve the general demand in his life. Duty and task, will and deed, decision and freedom all receive their due. He does not try to escape from himself and reality, but chooses himself in all its concreteness. According to the ethical point of view the personality has a center. The ethical man rejects, often indirectly, speculation, placing the aesthetic thinker before an Either-Or.

At this stage we see man in his unbroken strength; but when the ethical man is in earnest about his attitude, he will be broken and brought to despair. In repentance a new way is then opened to him, which leads to religion. It is this religion that Kierkegaard has had in view all the time, more exactly Christianity, for religion is not yet Christianity, and not all that seems Christian and assumes the forms and terms of Christianity is real Christianity. Kierkegaard's struggle is to become a Christian, to purify so-called Christianity from all admixtures.

Now before I unfold to you Kierkegaard's conception of Christianity, I wish to make clear to you how he keeps the categories pure, for he sees that many persons think in other categories than they live in, that people think "Christian" and imagine themselves to be Christians, but they are not. For this reason he distinguishes these spheres of life so sharply, for he sees how much aestheticism has penetrated into Christianity and has denatured it. All aestheticism must be ejected from Christianity, for this renders it ungenuine. He detects an aesthetic Christianity that is present in many people, which looks Christian but is not Christian.

What is the aestheticism which has to be ejected from Christianity as the dangerous and insidious enemy of it? Into this holy ground of true Christianity aestheticism has crept, in both forms, and has made it worldly, both in the form of romanticism and in that of speculation. Christian faith has become something like

Sunday, that is the common natural things in a Christian coat, or it has become speculative, has entirely entered and disappeared in the realm of thought: in both cases it is unreal. In both cases people think and imagine themselves to be in contact with God and God's world, but they are only in an imaginary relation to it. These were the dangers, also for Kierkegaard, hence the fierceness with which he fights against them. But he knows what Christianity is; he wants to get into the real relation to it and—he sees everywhere around him that people are not in the real relation to it, but in an aesthetic relation. Thinking that they are Christians, they seem to be so, but are not, and they do not know what Christianity really is.

Now Kierkegaard puts this so-called Christianity to the test and causes many a man to discover himself. He who reads his works must always be occupied with himself and discovers himself; that is, he finds out that there is a great deal in himself that is simply worldly and that he mistook for Christian; for a man is easily satisfied when the outward appearance looks fair. What is then the aestheticism that he discovers in himself?

Typical for the aesthetic attitude, as we saw, is that it is immediate. Well, in religion this is the emotion, the mood, what comes over us. We are moved in church, get into an exalted mood, but it is restricted to that single hour on Sunday morning. How is it, asks Kierkegaard, Monday afternoon at four o'clock? And that is the point that matters. For the religious attitude is a decided responsible choice of the personality, a choice for life, and not an emotion for a moment. Think of our Lord's parable in which He speaks of the seed that sprang up forthwith. It seemed splendid. Imagine the seed of the preaching springing up forthwith, the whole congregation is enthusiastic, it is then called inspired. But it is on Monday afternoon at four o'clock, when the cares and difficulties of life have come, that we stand in actual life. The Lord says the seed sprang up forthwith, and because it had no root, it withered away. Or think of the two sons of whom the Lord speaks, the son who immediately says yes, but does not go, or the hearers of the Word who did not become doers, of the nature-piety of romanticism. Oh, how much of this is found in preaching! When the preaching lies in aestheticism the churches are crowded; much emotion, but no edification, no conversion. Everything then appeals to the imagination, the mood, the emotion, the fantasy. Over against emotion and fantasy Kierkegaard sets earnestness, deed, reality. Emotion, he says in *Training in Christianity,* leads to admiration, but Christ does not want admirers. He who admires

remains at a distance. Christ wants followers, that is earnestness and deed. Kierkegaard goes even so far as to eject all that is aesthetic and artistic, and that he says that he cannot understand. He even condemns the desire to paint Christ. And at the end of his life he goes so far in his consistency that he condems everything that is naturally earthly, and makes Christianity equivalent to nothing but suffering and asceticism.

The aesthetic element has penetrated into Christianity in another way and destroyed it. I call this way the idealist attitude. Here it was the Hegelian philosophy that was responsible for the evil. All his life Kierkegaard combated this philosophy. I have purposely not spoken of his nor of Hegel's philosophy thus far, for I should certainly need to devote some hours to this, and it would lead us too far. But I must say at least something about it here, not to make this philosophy comprehensible, but to make Kierkegaard's attitude clear. In Kierkegaard's time speculative philosophy had had great influence on theology in Denmark, which had become a rather abstract system. Kierkegaard considered it impossible to give system to reality, because reality is never stationary. God surveys the whole, but we are but poor human creatures, who can see only fragments. And now comes the essential point in Kierkegaard's critique: such a speculative philosopher builds a mighty system, and Kierkegaard asks, does the philosopher live in this magnificent palace or does he live in a cottage near it? You feel at once the essential point. The question is, in what reality does one live? Even the philosopher who speaks about the "pure being," and who from this position has a bird's-eye view of everything, he too is only an ordinary human being, a concrete single individual. He himself is his reality; his mental building is his fantasy, in which he evades reality. See, this is the aesthetic attitude. And this had also penetrated into Christianity, not only in the system of theologians.

Aestheticism in this region I should like to define as three things: idea, construction of thought, and "knowledge about." The idea, Hegel's essential point, has its emotional value, and to many it gives occasion to mood. Is that vague, fine, high region of "Idea" not for many the charm of idealism in the midst of the difficulties of life? Does it not tend to exalt? Does not the thought of the "Idea" lift up the heart of a man out of the sordid everyday things, and does it not give him at the same time a feeling of breadth? Yes, the "Idea" is wide as the heavens—but it does not lead us to the deed; it lures us away from concrete life. Toward the

"Idea" we have no responsibility, for it is impersonal. When Christianity becomes "Idea" it evades reality.

My second point above was "thought construction." The "Idea" can become this, but how much besides this is also thought construction in the Christian faith! Here a danger menaces the theologian and every intellectual. Ideas usurp an unjustified place; one drives oneself into consequences; all ideas must then be brought to harmonize with each other and one leaves reality, which is not so logical, but paradoxical according to Kierkegaard, incompatible in itself. One gets detached from life; one even comes into conflict with life and reality. My third point was "knowledge about," which takes the place of life. We know much too much about Christianity, and then we think we possess it. From infancy we have known so much about Jesus Christ—how differently we should be impressed if we could hear of Him for the first time. Then we should not be hampered by all the things we know. Kierkegaard would place us before the mirror of the Word, that we may look into it and recognize ourselves for what we are. But how many look at the frame of the mirror and think it very beautiful. It is Kierkegaard's great gift to us to turn our eyes away from the beautiful exterior, so that we really look into the mirror. I think in particular of his book *For Self-Examination* (1851), in which he teaches us to read the Bible as a letter directed personally to us, and how we then should react to it.

In the course of my discussion I have naturally arrived at the religious attitude by describing the dangers threatening it from aestheticism.

In his literary labor Kierkegaard himself had not immediately reached the religious attitude either, that third stage. He slowly rose up to it from aestheticism, and the latter continued to be a danger. But by the side of the pseudonymous works, in which he led us on the way, he wrote edifying discourses under his own name from the very beginning. In these there is also an ascending line leading us nearer and nearer to Christianity, which at last ends at the foot of the altar, for there on Good Friday the remission of sins in Jesus Christ is received.

Hence, we are not at once at the heart of Christianity. In his writings Kierkegaard always proceeded like Socrates, causing us to discover ourselves, but he wanted to be a Socrates in the service of Christianity. In 1844 in his *Philosophical Fragments* he demonstrates to us that there is an intrinsic difference between the Socratic and the Christian point of view, as Socrates starts from the thought

that man has the truth within himself where the teacher needs only awaken it, whereas Christianity starts from the premise that man is in untruth and that the teacher (God) must give him the requisite for obtaining the truth, that is faith. Christianity presupposes sin. Does not the ethical man come to repentance and guilt? But only before God does a man become conscious of sin.

In his *Proscript* Kierkegaard speaks about two kinds of religiousness: "Religiosity A" and "Religiosity B." The former lies in immanence, is from outside of man who expects to reach the eternal things on that road, and it is also possible in paganism where man is held to be in an essential relation to the Eternal One. This religiosity has only human nature as presupposition. But in "Religiosity B," that is in Christianity, there is an absolute gulf between God and man, which God can only bridge by Himself coming to man in Jesus Christ, who is both God and man. God appears in time, and the moment of His appearance receives absolute significance. Here is the field of transcendence. Kierkegaard describes this as the region that passes all understanding, nay, that is even contrary to all intellectual thought; it is the absolute paradox, the absurdity. Here one must build one's eternal bliss on something that is historic, God in time, and this historic fact is the cross for the human reason. Trying to prove Christianity, as the rationalists wished, is betraying it. One must believe it in spite of everything. Faith always brings suffering into the world, but here the suffering is doubled, for the martyrdom of the Christian is: crucifying his reason. Christian preaching gives offense. When Jesus calls: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," it might be thought that many would flock to Him from all sides, but hardly anybody comes, for they understand what this involves. Does Jesus not give offense by His person? He claimed to be God and He had no form nor comeliness. Again and again Kierkegaard says that Christianity imposes very severe demands. Deeper and deeper he makes us feel that the Lord, in whom God comes to us, was nailed to the cross, and that we must follow Him on the way of the cross. The high God assumed the incognito of the shape of a servant to come to us. He demands from us the impossible, contrary to all human morality. Abraham on Mount Moriah is described to us in *Fear and Trembling* in such a way that we can never forget the lonely figure. But like Abraham and Job we must believe, in all anxiety and fear and against all reason, that with God all things are possible.

But if Christianity brings so much fear and anxiety, gives offense in every respect, and is entirely contrary to reasonable thought, why does a man then concern himself about it? Men would never do so if they were not impelled by the consciousness of sin which is not engendered in a man until he comes into contact with God—for sin only exists before God; outside God there is only evil. This consciousness of sin drives a man in anxiety through the offense to the venture of faith.

I will not take the time to describe for you the theological ideas of Kierkegaard. He did not give us a theology, but he has had great influence on the Swiss theology of Barth and Brunner. Especially in his realization of the absolute distance of God from man, which can only be bridged by the revelation of a deed of God, and that this deed lies in the one point of history in Jesus Christ. In the nineteenth century Schleiermacher's theology was taken by many people as a foundation. Schleiermacher started from man and his piety; Kierkegaard is the reaction to Schleiermacher, not heard in his time, but resumed in the twentieth century, asserting that we do not know God from our religious experiences. God can only be known through revelation, not a general revelation in the heart of every man, but only through the particular revelation that the unknowable God comes to us and becomes man in Christ. All this is foolishness for the human reason—it was this already for the Greeks—but can only be believed by divine grace.

When Kierkegaard had set forth in his teaching the full vigor of faith, he found no concurrence. Then came the unfortunate pompous funeral speech, which I told you about, which caused the fight to break out against the existing Christendom, which thought itself all Christians, but which did not come up to what is taught in the New Testament. Caustically sharp are Kierkegaard's last pamphlets against the church and Christendom, but I will not enter into this.

One more quesion: did this fighter not know the peace of faith himself? Kierkegaard always speaks of anxiety and sin and offense, even of the "venture" of faith, but in a "venture" the anxiety remains. Kierkegaard's way was toward Christianity, but did he enter into it? He says again and again: I am no Christian, but I know what it is. Is this only pedagogy, that he will not place himself above the others? Does he never learn to know atonement and the rest in forgiveness? As I said before, Kierkegaard was educated by a melancholy father, who also wanted to lead him to Christianity,

but only showed him the Man of Sorrows, the Crucified Christ. His father lived in anxiety of sins, and the son was like the father. But this he knew: the only gate to enter Christianity is consciousness of sin; this drives us to Christianity, and he was always on the way, and thus found it is easy to say: Jesus accepts sinners, and He died for their sins. But one must come to the personal "*me* too He has accepted," "He has borne *my* sins and taken them away." With this Kierkegaard wrestled. But in his last discourse which he pronounced in church himself he thankfully testifies to the remission of sin which is in Christ's death. And we feel the also-for-him, when amidst the last fierce fight he gives a discourse on "God's Unchangeableness": God's love is always near, however far we may have strayed away. To this also testify his last words on his deathbed: that all that he had written was to expel evil and so to come to Hallelujah. "And this is all," asks his friend Boësen, "because you believe in and flee to God's grace in Christ?" "Yes, of course, what else?" answers Kierkegaard.

I have reached the end of Kierkegaard's way and will conclude. I hope I have given you an introduction to the man and his message. Not that you now know much about him, for I have, indeed, omitted much that is very important, and I have mentioned other things only cursorily. But I have tried to pave the way so that you may be able to read him and understand him somewhat. An introduction is never a conclusion; it is no more than opening the door. I do not hope that you think at all, "Now I know more or less who Kierkegaard is," for then you close the door again.

After all, Kierkegaard has not wanted to do more than open the hearts, first of all his own heart, to the preaching of God's forgiving love. If I have contributed something to your understanding of Kierkegaard, I have indirectly also furthered the other and greater end.

WEST PRUSSIAN MENNONITES THROUGH FOUR CENTURIES*

HORST PENNER, *Obristfeld, Germany*

The Anabaptist movement was born in the year 1525 in Switzerland. From there it spread rapidly to the mountain regions of Austria and South Germany, and from South Germany Melchior Hofmann carried the ideas down the Rhine. The seed which Hofmann scattered in the Dutch-North German territory soon bore abundant fruit, and from 1530 to 1560 the Anabaptists vitally influenced the character of the Reformation in Holland.

From the very beginning persecution was the lot of the Anabaptists. In Moravia, particularly in the region of Nickolsburg, the harried Anabaptists, beset by the threat of death from 1526 on, found a place of toleration. Countless refugees from Switzerland, the Tyrol, and South Germany formed congregations here, and sent out missionaries to Silesia, to southwest Germany, and even occasionally to Holland, to win followers for the cause. Many accepted the new teaching and went to Moravia, there to join the rapidly growing congregations.

In 1531 the first Anabaptist missionaries reached Prussia, which Albrecht von Hohenzollern had established as a secular duchy in 1525 by seizing the last of the territory held by the Teutonic Knights. At that time Oswald Glait, an Anabaptist preacher from Cham in the Oberpfalz, sought a field of activity in Prussia. Duke Albrecht and his influential councilor, Baron von Heydack, at first did not take a wholly negative position to the new teachings concerning baptism and the Lord's Supper. But at the suggestion of Luther, the duke in 1532 ordered the expulsion of Glait and his Anabaptist friends, Oswald Griesskirchen and Hans Bünderlin of Linz. The exiles were received by their brethren in Moravia.[1]

The revolution in Münster (1534-35) and the seditious attack on the city hall in Amsterdam (1534) stirred up the persecuting zeal of the authorities in the entire Holy Roman Empire to the highest pitch. Not only the revolutionary Anabaptists but also the great mass of peaceful Anabaptists who had nothing to do with force and violence, were persecuted with fire and sword. Even in Moravia severe decrees of exile were issued.

* An address delivered before the Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein (Germany) in June, 1949. Translated from the German.

[1] *Mennonisches Lexikon*, II (1937) 118 and 712. Also A. Brons, *Ursprung, Entwicklung und Schicksale der altevangelischen Taufgesinnten oder Mennoniten.* 3. Aufl. (Emden, 1913), 230.

In the spring of 1535 a group of Moravian Anabaptists, in part of Silesian origin, consisting of sixty heads of families with wives, children, and servants to a total of some 200 persons, who had been driven out of their previous place of refuge, came to the region of Thorn, Graudenz, and the Duchy of Prussia. They constituted the initial core of the Anabaptist congregations in the lowlands of the Vistula near Culm and Graudenz.[2] At the same time Christian Entfelder, a former Austrian Anabaptist leader, who was the elder of an Anabaptist congregation in Moravia 1526-27, came to Prussia. By profession a lawyer, he had once, in the year 1525, prepared a legal opinion for Duke Albrecht in regard to certain political problems of the Teutonic Knights. Now he entered the service of Albrecht and was appointed ducal councilor in 1536.[3] In 1541 Wilhelm Gnapheus, the Dutch humanist, also became a ducal councilor,[4] a man who was already known in Königsberg as one who "was not ill-experienced and skillful in the Scripture, but was a follower of the Anabaptist or some other fanatical sect." In 1542 Dr. Gerhard Westerburg of Cologne, founder of the Anabaptist congregation at that place but now an apostate, also entered the service of the duke. His brother Antonius of Cologne was ordained Anabaptist elder about the same time by Menno Simons and Dirk Philips to serve in the Lower Rhine area.[5] Also the Dutch court librarian and the Dutch personal physician of the duke held the common Dutch point of view of the Reformation at that time, which differed from Luther's in the matters of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Thus there were powerful influences in the government of the duchy which could afford the persecuted Anabaptists both protection and help.

In Moravia conditions soon improved for the Anabaptists and remained favorable to them throughout most of the sixteenth century. For this reason no further emigration from there to West Prussia took place. As a substitute for this, however, almost every ship which sailed from Holland to Danzig after 1534 in the rather considerable commercial traffic between the two countries, brought persecuted Anabaptists from the low countries to the shores of Prussia. By the autumn of 1534 loud protests were being raised in

[2] B. Schumacher, *Niederländische Ansiedlungen im Herzogtum Preussen zur Zeit Herzog Albrechts (1525-1568)* (Leipzig, 1903), 154 ff.; cf. also, *Menn. Lex.* article "Ascherham" (I, [1913] 87) and "Gabrieler" (II, [1937] 24).

[3] Schumacher, *op. cit.*, note on page 240—*Menn. Lex.*, I, 594.

[4] Schumacher, *op. cit.*, 57.

[5] P. Tschackert, *Urkundenbuch zur Reformationsgeschichte Preussens,* Bd. I, 324. Cf. *Menn. Lex.*, I, 76.

Danzig against the spread of Anabaptism in the adjacent portion of the duchy of Prussia, known as the "Oberland." This territory, lying in the west end of the duchy, which had been severely devastated in the war known as the "Reuterkrieg" (1519-1525), had received the first refugee settlers from Holland in 1527.[6]

The first Anabaptist group settlement in this territory was made in 1539 in Schönberg in the "Oberland," when 1700 hectares (4250 acres) were made available for the settlers. In the negotiations for this settlement Christian Entfelder, the ex-Anabaptist preacher from Moravia, represented the Königsberg authorities and the Dutch settlers were represented by Herman Sachs and Hugo Mathiszon van Haag, both of whom had already been active as Anabaptist preachers in the Netherlands.[7]

But the following years witnessed the gradual dominance of the Lutheran point of view in the Reformation at the court of Duke Albrecht. In 1543 the magistrate of Schönberg was ordered to see to it that each newborn child was baptized, and as the result of a complaint of a Lutheran bishop, the Duke ordered an ecclesiastical inspection of the settlements in that same spring. When it was discovered that the Dutch settlers differed from the Prussian church constitution in the matter of baptism and the Lord's Supper, the unofficial toleration was annulled, and the great majority of the settlers were expelled, inasmuch as they remained true to their faith. Thus the first Anabaptist settlement in the duchy of Prussia was destroyed. The settlers found new homes in West Prussia, and in the free cities of Elbing and Danzig, where the Polish authorities had to give religious toleration to their German subjects, who for the most part had accepted the Reformation.[8]

A new phase in the Prussian-Anabaptist movement now developed, which was to make it permanent. The years 1547-1550 became decisive. At this time a great drainage enterprise was initiated, to drain the Vistula delta. It extended over a territory of forty miles in width from Drausen lake to Ellerwald, covering the two great delta areas east of Danzig, an undertaking which was to require three to four generations. About 1550 the Anabaptists began their great work in this enterprise at two points: at Wengeln on Drausen lake, and near Elbing in the Ellerwald area. In 1547 the territory of Tiegenhof, commonly called the "Unterwerder" (lower

[6] S. Cosack, *Paulus Speratus* (Braunschweig, 1861), 153.

[7] B. Schumacher, *op. cit.*, 45 and 176 f. Van Slee, Historie de Doopsgezinden te *Deventer* 8, and Vos, *Kleine Bijdragen,* 136 ff. in *Doopsgez. Bijdragen 54. Jg.* (1917).

[8] B. Schumacher, *op. cit.*, 46.

delta), was acquired by the Danzig banker Loysen, who used Mennonite settlers from Holland in the following years for the work of drainage.[9] In the same year two prominent Anabaptists who had been living in the duchy, Hermann von Bommeln and Tönnis Florissen, acquired large areas in the Danzig werder (lowlands) for settlement.

For these extensive undertakings the number of Anabaptists already living in Prussia was quite inadequate. Accordingly, Philip Edzema, a Frisian, went to Holland with a letter of recommendation from the Danzig Council to enlist "people of his nation," as the letter stated, for the drainage of further areas in the Danzig werder. Somewhat earlier similar enterprises were begun by the Anabaptists in the Vistula Valley at Culm, Graudenz, and Thorn. In the early 1530's scattered Anabaptists had already settled in Elbing and Danzig.[10]

From the religious point of view the years 1547-1550 were also a turning point. It is only from this time on that one can really speak of Mennonites in West Prussia. By 1550 a large Anabaptist congregation had been established in West Prussia, with its center in Danzig, or rather in Schottland, a settlement outside the walls of the city. Inasmuch as the Anabaptists were not permitted to settle in the city proper because of the opposition and jealousy of the Lutheran clergy, they made their settlement in this place, where they both had their worship and established their shops for the manufacture of fine textiles and brandy.[11] Hugo Mathiszon van Haag, a weaver, and Hermann van Bommeln, the former court chaplain of Carel van Geldern, the regent of the Dutch province of Friesland, were the ministers of the Danzig Anabaptist congregation about 1550. The church also had two deacons, Tonas Barbier, a native of Emden, and Michel Janszoon of Oisterhout in Brabant.[12]

In the summer of 1549 Menno Simons came to Prussia, together with Dirk Philips, to preach and to establish the church in Prussia in permanent form. It was no doubt at this time that the influence of the "sacramentarians," the forerunners of the Dutch Reformed, who had made themselves felt among the Anabaptists in Prussia, was rooted out, both in persons and in teaching. Menno

[9] John Muhl, *Danziger Bürgergeschlechter in ländlichem Besitz.* in *Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins Jg.* 1934, 90 ff. Cf. also H. Penner, *Ansiedlungen mennonitischer Niederländer,* etc. 43 f. in *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter.*

[10] *Ibid.,* 12 ff. and 67 ff.

[11] Vos, *op. cit.*

[12] *Ibid.*

Simons himself gave the church in Prussia its permanent character. His loving concern for the "brethren in Prussia" is evidenced by a letter which he wrote in August, 1547, to them from his home in the west, closely following his visit to them.[13]

The significance of the refugee group here was so great that Menno's most intimate co-worker, Dirk Philips, assumed the leadership of the congregation in Danzig for the rest of his life. In 1567 he made a trip to Emden in order to mediate in a controversy between the Flemish and the Frisian Mennonites in Holland. Unfortunately, as a result of his severe and rigid position in the matter of excommunication and the use of avoidance in marriage (he favored the Flemish position), he actually made it impossible to bring about a peaceful settlement of this issue which troubled many Mennonite churches of Holland. He died during this trip, far from his home congregation.[14]

From this time on there were both Flemish and Frisian congregations in Prussia. It is due to the influence of Dirk Philips that the stricter Flemish party won the upper hand, both in Danzig and in the northern coastal area near Elbing, particularly in what is known as the "Grosswerder," i.e., the Great Delta. In the so-called "Klein Marienburger Werder" and in the valley of the Vistula the Frisian party was dominant. In Danzig also there was a small congregation of the United Frisian, Waterlander, and High German groups in addition to the large Flemish group. The Frisian congregations were blessed with an able leader in the person of Jan Gerrits. Since the year of his emigration from the Netherlands to Prussia, 1607, also marked the beginning of the ruthless destruction of the great Anabaptist congregations in Moravia, he, as elder of the United Church in Danzig, which included the High German group, visited the High German congregations in Moravia and brought back with him to Danzig a preacher by the name of Wall.[15] In 1604 the Swiss Anabaptist preacher, Joseph Hauser, with seven other brethren and their families, a total of thirty-seven persons, had already emigrated from Moravia to Prussia, and after an unsuccessful attempt to settle in Elbing, they finally located in the Mennonite settlement in Wengeln on Drausen lake.[16] At this time

[13] Cornelius Krahn, "Menno Simons in Deutschland," in *Menn. Geschichtsbl. 1936,* 14.

[14] Carel van Ghendt, in *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica,* VII ('s-Gravenhage, 1910). Concerning Dirk Philip's stay in Danzig see also *Menn. Lex.,* II, 179 and III, 227.

[15] "Alensons Tegenbericht" in *Biblioth. Ref. Neerl.,* VII reports this.

[16] *Menn. Lex.,* II, 265. Concerning "Oberdeutsche Täufer" in the Vistula Valley, see also Reiswitz, Frh. v. und Wadzek, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Mennon.-Gemeinden*

also apparently a number of Anabaptist families of Swiss (ultimate) origin settled in the valley of the Vistula.

The first decades of the seventeenth century were significant for the rural congregations of this region in other ways. From this time forward the dominant position of the Danzig city church in West Prussian Mennonitism gradually declined. The rural Mennonites began to develop both ecclesiastically and economically into strong groups, becoming increasingly independent of the city churches.

In 1613 the Mennonites of the Danzig werder refused on conscientious grounds to obey the demand of the City Council for military service, and received exemption from this service on the basis of a money payment. This is the first time that the problem of nonresistance appears in the history of the West Prussian Mennonites, a problem which was to be so important in their later history.[17] In 1622 there occurred another significant development, namely, the formation of a fire insurance organization covering all the Mennonite farmers in the Danzig werder and the "Grosswerder." Through this co-operative organization a farmer who had lost his buildings by fire recovered his loss by money payments from the other farmers on the basis of a prorated charge on their acreage. The near neighbors also helped in the work of clearing away the ruins and erecting new buildings.[18]

During this time the Mennonites suffered grievously under the attacks of a hostile environment. Their "defenselessness" was exploited, and enormous sums of money were extracted from them, until finally King Wladislaus IV granted them a "privilegium" or charter in the year 1642, which promised them a large measure of toleration as well as protection and a guarantee of their old privileges for all time. (This was granted naturally also on the basis of a money payment.) This charter refers with high praise to their great services to the country in the matter of drainage and recovery of land in the werder. It was repeatedly confirmed and renewed by the later kings.[19]

About this time, that is, one hundred years after the beginning, the basic work in the drainage of the three werders had been completed, with windmills, dikes, sluices, and countless drainage ditches.

in Europa und Amerika (Berlin, 1821) Bd. I, 25, and Behaim-Schwarzbach, *Hohenzollernsche Kolonisation* (1874), 419.

17 H. Penner, *op. cit.*, 17 f.

18 *Ibid.*, 18 ff.

19 *Ibid.*, 45 f.

Fat cattle pastured on the fertile meadows. The extensive polders of the three werders were completed. However, this tremendous achievement was accomplished at a very high cost in human life. Eighty per cent of the settlers are said to have died of the marsh fever.[20] "The first generation died, the second experienced need, and the third had its bread." ("Die erste Generation hatte den Tod, die zweite die Not, die dritte das Brot.")

The newly settled area in the grosswerder was included in the territory of the Flemish congregation, since the unity in colonization work was accompanied by unity in church work. The center of this congregation, the congregation of the "Niederung," later became the Rosenort congregation. In 1639 Hans Siemens was chosen as the first elder of this congregation. Up until this time the elder of the Danzig church had served the group in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.[21] A smaller Frisian congregation was organized in the neighborhood with the name "Orlofferfelde." Other Frisian congregations were organized at Markushof, Montau, and Schönsee, while a smaller Flemish congregation was organized at Culm and a larger one in Elbing-Ellerwald.

In 1638 Johann Jakobsen van Gehema, a fellow countryman of the Mennonites from Holland, who was in close contact with them, at least through the marriage of his daughter to a Mennonite, took possession of the Tiegenhof area through mortgage. Thereby the position of the Mennonite settlers was made more secure,[22] and in the following decades there was further immigration into the grosswerder from the Danzig region. The causes of this immigration were not only the unfriendly attitude of the Danzig Council toward the Mennonites, who had a difficult time during the period when the shoemaker Georg Hansen was their elder, but also the inundation of the Danzig werder in 1656 at the time of the war between Sweden and Poland.[23] After 1700, however, there was no more room for the surplus population of the growing Mennonite settlement. The valley of the Vistula in particular offered little room for expansion. Consequently, when the great plague of 1709 in the eastern part of East Prussia wiped out the greater part of the

[20] *Menn. Geschichtsblätter* (Frankfurt a. M.), IV. 1 (August, 1939), 56.

[21] Ernst Regehr, "Geschichtstabelle der Gemeinde Rosenort," in *Mennonitische Blätter* Jg. 84. (1937), 3 ff.

[22] John Muhl, *op cit.* Van Gehema became a citizen of Danzig in 1640. His daughter Catharina married the Mennonite merchant, Abraham de Veer, of Danzig before 1646. (John Howard de Veer, "Die Familie de Veer in Deutschland," in *Mitt. des Sippenverbandes . . . Kauenhowen.* 5 Jg. [1939] Heft 3, 82.)

[23] H. Penner, *op. cit.*, 22 f.

population there, the Prussian government offered the Mennonites land for settlement in the delta of the Memel River. But in 1724 the militaristic king of Prussia, Frederick William I, ordered the nonresistant Mennonites expelled, since they refused to take up arms.[24] The returning settlers from the Memel territory naturally increased the already excessive population in the West Prussian area.[25]

Two possibilities now offered themselves for the acquisition of new land for settlement by the Mennonites. One was the purchase of scattered surplus parcels of land belonging to the villages of the former Teutonic Knights. Thus, a considerable number of individual farms were secured, on each of which a single family was settled, living in the midst of its acreage under one roof with the cattle and the produce from the fields. The layout of the house was such that the stables were attached next to the dwelling and the barn attached to the stable. The barnyard itself was usually surrounded by groups of high trees and gardens filled with flowers, and was kept scrupulously clean. The people observed the most conscientious cleanliness and simplicity in clothing and in their furniture.

The second possibility of land purchase arose when the distribution of the scattered farms and meadows which formerly belonged to the Teutonic Knights in the Marienwerder region and in the so-called "Oberwerder" were offered for sale. A small group of Mennonites had settled as early as 1554 in the "Oberwerder" in and around Heubuden. Now Heubuden became a very large congregation,[26] whose members were settled on the extensive grazing lands which had formerly been used for the enormous numbers of horses required by the knights. This new area extended from the former Order estates of Kalthof and Warnau near Marienburg through Heubuden to Leske.[27] As a result the membership of the Heubuden congregation increased greatly during the first half of the eighteenth century. In 1711 there were only eleven candidates for baptism, but in 1743 three times as many. In 1728 the congrega-

24 E. Randt, *Die Mennoniten in Ostpreussen und Litauen bis zum Jahre 1772.* Königsb. Diss. 1912. Behaim-Schwarzbach, *op. cit.,* 167 ff.

25 Cf. also the article "Litauen" in *Menn. Lex.,* II (1937) by H. Quiring.

26 Abr. Driedger, "Geschichte der Mennonitengemeinde Heubuden" in *Menn. Blätter,* Jg. 86 (1939) (Elbing).

27 Bernhard Schmid, "Der Ordenshof Kalthof" in *Mitteilungen des Westpreussischen Geschichts-Vereins* Jg. 35, 61 ff. M. Töppen, "Topographische statistische Mitteilungen über die Domänenwerke des Deutschen Ordens," in *Altpreussische Monatsschrift* VII, 476 ff. (1870).

tion, which for sixty years previously had had no ministers of its own, now chose Jakob Dyck as its first elder.[28]

About the same time another Frisian congregation was established on the grazing lands of the Marienwerder area south of Marienburg, called Tragheimerweide.[29] This settlement was established chiefly by returning settlers who had been expelled from the Memel district.

Meanwhile, growth in membership finally compelled the Grosswerder congregation to subdivide into four new congregations. In 1735 Tiegenhagen, Fürstenwerder, and Ladekopp were organized, with Rosenort remaining as the central congregation. Church buildings were permitted by the authorities in the Vistula Delta only after a long delay. The dates of the first two churches are 1728 at Thiensdorf and 1754 at Rosenort. The other congregations built their church houses in 1768. Earlier the services had been conducted in barns.

The church records give evidence of the active spiritual life of the Grosswerder congregation. For instance, in July, 1741, in the stable of the widow Suckau in Mausdorferfeld baptism was administered to fifty-one candidates in the presence of 1,000 people. Further, on March 2, 1755, the Lord's Supper was celebrated in the new church at Rosenort with 1566 participants. Again, on July 6, 1755, the newly-elected elder, Abraham Penner, was ordained by a Danzig elder, Hans van Steen, in the presence of a crowd of 2,500 to 3,000 persons. "The floor of the building was removed, some sat in the balcony, others stood on ladders which were placed against the windows from the outside, while others stood on carriages."[30]

Hans van Steen was, it might be noted, the last elder who spoke and wrote Dutch exclusively. It must be remembered that from 1600 to 1750 there was frequent contact between Danzig and Holland, not only by correspondence, but also by personal visits. The wealthy members, especially those in Danzig, preferred to send their sons to Amsterdam where they could complete their schooling and learn commercial practice. Marriages back and forth were also not uncommon.[31] The country congregations, however, could not continue this regular personal contact with Holland, since they adopted the dialect known as "Wenderplatt" considerably earlier than in

[28] A. Driedger, *op. cit.*, 42 f.

[29] Herbert Wiebe, *Das Siedlungswerk niederländischer Mennoniten im Weichseltal zwischen Fordon und Weissenberg bis zum Ausgang des 18 Jh.* Unpublished Diss., 1942.

[30] E. Regehr, *op. cit.*

[31] As early as 1615 Carel van Ghendt, *op. cit.*, 19, writes that one travels to marry "van Dantzick tot Nederlant, ende van daer weder tot Dantzick."

Danzig for use in everyday life, and even in preaching introduced the German one to two decades earlier than in the city.

The Mennonite farmers from the beginning paid the most serious attention to the education of their children. Even in the sixteenth century they had already had their own schools. From 1700 on the charters almost universally mentioned the right of the Mennonites to have their children educated apart by their own schoolteachers.[32]

Another important feature of the West Prussian Mennonite church life in earlier times was the hospital or old people's home which each congregation erected beside the church building, in which the members who were no longer able to earn their own living could be cared for. Brotherly aid in various forms was considered to be a chief duty of the Mennonites.

The last years of the Polish period were marked by a considerable loss of legal protection. For instance, in 1765 two hundred Mennonites were forced to emigrate from the Vistula Valley for religious reasons. They settled in the "Neumark."[33] The first partition of Poland in 1772, by which West Prussia became a part of the Kingdom of Prussia, meant at first an advantage for the Mennonites since governmental conditions improved, and Frederick the Great had a high regard for superior farmers. Accordingly, when the ceremonial honoring of the new king was to take place in the autumn of 1772 in the mighty old castle of the Teutonic Knights in Marienburg, representatives of the Mennonites of the region delivered for the festival meal two fat oxen, 400 pounds of butter, one hundred ducks and hens, and twenty cheeses.[34] At the same time they showed the king their Polish charters with privileges, and requested him to give them a similar charter, which they actually received in 1780. In this charter, among other things, their exemption from military service was confirmed.

But it soon became clear that the Mennonites were now subjects of a military state. According to the Prussian army code the obligation of military service derived from the ownership of property. Accordingly, the purchase of property by Mennonites, whose number was constantly increasing, would reduce the number of men available for military service, and could not be in the interest of the state. But Frederick the Great was generous in this point, and granted, for instance, in the years 1781-84 alone, permission for the

[32] H. Wiebe, *op. cit.*
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] A. Brons, *op. cit.*, 259 f.

purchase by Mennonites of 296 new tracts of land never held by Mennonites before.[35] However, all Mennonites in West Prussia and East Prussia had to pay for the privilege of exemption by contributing annually (from 1773 on) at total of 5,000 Taler to the support of the military academy in Culm.

Outside of Danzig and Thorn the Mennonites at that time numbered 13,500 souls and owned approximately 150,000 Prussian "morgen" of the best lowlands in the Delta of the Vistula. After the death of Frederick the Great, who had a high regard for the Mennonites as excellent farmers for their services in the rehabilitation of the agriculture of the province which had suffered so much under the Polish authorities, the generosity of the government came to an end. The Lutheran pastors of the werder who were concerned about the future of their congregations, as well as the government officials who were responsible for providing recruits for military service and were concerned about a shortage in the number, urged the king to prohibit further extension of Mennonite landholdings. For this reason Frederick William II issued a special decree in 1789 bearing the title "Edict concerning the Future of Mennonitism," which guaranteed freedom of conscience in regard to military service but restricted sharply the opportunity to purchase land and obliged the Mennonite landowners to pay the regular church tax required of members of the Lutheran churches.[36] Thus began an eighty-year struggle by the West Prussian Mennonites to maintain one of their major basic principles of faith in the matter of nonresistance. In 1801 the edict of 1789 was still further sharpened to make the purchase of any further land at all impossible.

Under these conditions the surplus Mennonite rural population had only one outlet, namely, emigration. This emigration was now undertaken in the form of a large-scale movement to South Russia. The ancient migration route up the Vistula to the broad steppes of the Black Sea area, which the Goths had once traveled, was now again traveled by countless farm wagons loaded high with furniture, beds, and household goods. But it was not only the landless and poorer Mennonites who sought a new home in the Ukraine. Many others who were not satisfied with the new conditions in West Prussia sold their farms and joined the migrants. In the years 1787-1865 the entire surplus population of the West Prussian Mennonites migrated to Russia, as is evidenced by the fact that the

[35] Nottarp, *Die Mennoniten in den Marienburger Werdern* (Halle, 1929), 42 ff.
[36] *Ibid.*

population figure in the homeland remained static at about 13,000 souls.[37]

In the time of Prussia's great need during the Napoleonic Wars (1806-1814) the Mennonites who remained in West Prussia gave their loyal support to the government, but nevertheless were subjected to a renewed and vigorous attack on their freedom from military service. In 1806 the Mennonites made a voluntary grant of 30,000 Taler to King Frederick William III on the occasion of his visit to Königsberg. In 1810 they added another voluntary contribution of 10,000 Taler to the compulsory war tax which all Prussians had to pay. When the king issued his famous "appeal to my people" in 1813, love for the enslaved homeland was strong in the hearts of the Mennonites, but their spiritual duty to God, which forbade military service for them, still held first place in their consciences. Accordingly, they did not furnish any soldiers, but did deliver 500 horses and paid 25,000 Talers tax. In addition they made a voluntary contribution of 60,000 Guilders and 6,000 ells of linen. All attempts to force them into active military service, however, met a stubbornly successful resistance which was expressed in the following statement: "Although we are prepared to support in every way possible the state which protects and tolerates us, it is impossible for us to have any part in military service as long as we are Mennonites and remain so."[38] The congregations carried through on this basis, even in spite of the fact that a number of their young men accepted military service and joined the "army of freedom." Although official pressure was brought occasionally to force the churches to receive these young men back into fellowship after their return from the front, the churches held their position and refused. Again, when the military reserve corps (Landsturm) was established by the army and universal military service was introduced in September, 1814, new attempts were made to persuade the Mennonites to accept military service. All such attempts failed. As a substitute the Mennonites paid a certain sum per acre into the military treasury to support the Landsturm.

A crucial time for the congregations came to pass when the North German Confederacy passed a law on November 9, 1867, which annulled the Mennonite privilege of exemption from military service. The crisis was alleviated somewhat by a modification of

[37] E. Keyser, "Die Niederlande und das Weichselland" in *Deutsches Archiv für Landes-u. Volksforschung,* VI, Dec., 1942.

[38] Max Schön, *Das Mennonitentum in Westpreussen* (Berlin, 1886), 56 ff.

the law through an order of the cabinet dated March 3, 1868, which authorized noncombatant service to be substituted for regular military service by those Mennonites who could not conscientiously serve with arms. They were offered the opportunity to serve as hospital orderlies, clerks, and wagon-drivers. They were also released from the military oath of loyalty and permitted to substitute a simple handclasp.[39] However, the Mennonites still faced the basic issue on their stand for nonresistance, and a great number of the Mennonites could not conscientiously accept even noncombatant military service. Among these were the elders of the congregations at Heubuden and Obernessau, both of whom emigrated with a part of their congregations to Kansas and Nebraska in the United States.

For those who remained behind and accepted the new arrangement, the previous restrictions in the purchase of land naturally fell away. In the eyes of the state and of their neighbors Mennonites now became better citizens of the state. To achieve this position, however, they had to surrender one of the two fundamental articles of faith which had hitherto separated them from their fellow citizens. This meant that their separation from the world and therefore their peculiar character as Mennonites was in part eliminated. It is true that until the first World War something of this typical Mennonite character as different from the surrounding world remained in the sense that in practice Mennonites did not have to perform combatant military service. However, the first World War brought a decisive change in this, since the common experience of fighting at the front and sharing in the war caused a further inner adjustment by the Mennonites to the rest of the population, even though a large percentage of the men still took noncombatant service in this war. Mixed marriages with other churches also became more frequent.

This was the situation among the Mennonites of West Prussia when the second World War came. This time Mennonites took regular military service along with other Germans. The Bolshevik flood from the East now took from them their homeland and their existence as a settlement. However, the solidarity of the West Prussian Mennonite "family-church" in the faith of Menno Simons is now firmer than in recent times, at least in inner attitude if not in external forms, in spite of the dispersion of the congregations.

[39] *Ibid.*

When the Russian army marched into the delta of the Vistula in early 1945, where the great majority of the Mennonites of West Prussia lived, the great emigration began. January 24 was the initial day when the endless columns of wagons and trucks began to move the Mennonites out of the Werder territory which had been their home for 400 years. This was no organized movement. Part of the group succeeded in getting across the Oder River before the Russians flung their army in encirclement around Danzig. The remainder finally had to flee by sea to save their bare lives, and many of these finally reached Denmark. A large part of those who remained behind were transported into the interior of Russia, or suffered severely where they remained in their old home territory. About 1,800 were finally located in camps in Denmark[40] where elders Bruno Ewert of Heubuden and Bruno Enss of Orlofferfelde took charge of the group. In September, 1945, a commissioner of the Mennonite Central Committee, C. F. Klassen, visited the group in Denmark and initiated the relief work of the American Mennonites for them. Some 500 persons of this group were settled in Uruguay, October 7, 1948, by the M.C.C. In Germany deacon Gustav Reimer of Heubuden, secretary of the conference of the former West and East Prussian congregations, was assigned the task of re-establishing contact among the widely scattered members in Germany and aiding them in their attempt to find a new homeland elsewhere.

At the present time some 5,500 West Prussian Mennonites are living as refugees in the British Zone of Germany, and a further 1,000 in the American and French Zones. The number in the Russian Zone is not known, but probably also reaches 1,000. The largest concentration in any one area in Germany is in Schleswig-Holstein and the territory around Hamburg, where about 2,700 are located.

[40] *"Der Mennonit"* (Basel), I (1948), 31 f.

FROM MILITARY SERVICE TO CHRISTIAN NONRESISTANCE

The Testimony of a Former French Army Officer*

PIERRE WIDMER, *Nommay, France*

For more than a hundred years the French Mennonites have almost completely abandoned the traditional position of nonresistance and refusal of military service which had characterized from the beginning the movement of the Swiss Brethren and had led the Anabaptists to flee from one country to another across Europe and even to America in order to safeguard their right to live according to the Gospel. The last official request presented to the government by the French Mennonites to obtain recognition of the principle of nonparticipation in war for conscience' sake, dates from the time of Napoleon I. The great emperor granted them an exemption from service in the combatant troops. But with his continual wars, it became more and more difficult for them to have this exemption respected.

During the nineteenth century and more particularly just before the first World War, military service having become obligatory for all French men twenty-one years old, the French Mennonites began to follow the pattern of doing it like everybody else, without even trying to serve in the transport or medical troops. Individually, some of them attempted to remain as Mennonite as possible by doing their military service in noncombatant units. Others prayed that they might not have to make use of their arms, which to us seems to be a very false position. For still others, and we believe that they were the greatest number, military service did not raise any problem, and it was carried out without any scruple of conscience.

I myself was brought up in this atmosphere. Only the members of the brotherhood who were of Swiss nationality and paid their taxes in Switzerland, did no military service. If I recall correctly, I believe the French members of our church somewhat envied the Swiss for being able to get out of it so easily. But it seems that no one thought that it could be otherwise, and I think we were very unworthy descendants of the first Mennonites, thus so readily to do our military service and to participate with no misgivings in war or in its preparation; for, after all, it is not the normal thing

* Translated from the French by Lois Gunden.

thus to dedicate so many years—and the best ones—to a work of death.

However, some were bothered by these things, and I knew that several of our aged brethren supported this or that pacifist movement, such as: *"To abolish the crime of war."* But I do not remember having heard this problem spoken of in church, either in a church service or in the course of religious instruction; perhaps I have forgotten it, but that would astonish me.

On the other hand, I remember very well our children's games, during and after the other war. We had seen so much of soldiers that most of our games were games having to do with war. In these games I was often a commander, wearing stripes on my cap and on my sleeves, and I used to dream of really wearing them someday. To be an officer, an officer in the French army, the finest in the world: what an ideal!

How did my feelings in regard to this change? under what influences? I would be unable to say. Always I kept an ardent desire to be an officer someday, all the while beginning to feel in my heart that this was perhaps not well. I was beginning to question the usefulness of this service and the approval which God could give to it. It is also undoubtedly during this period that I experienced serious misgivings concerning the well-being of my soul, being troubled over my salvation. At that time I read the Word of God daily, and God was working in me through His word and His Spirit. More and more as I began to comprehend the love of God for me, I also was discovering the horror of sin and of war, which is one of its particularly frightful manifestations. And I was becoming more and more convinced that my boyhood dream was incompatible with a true Christian life. Would I never be able to be an officer? It was painful for me to have to renounce it. A struggle was going on within my mind. I felt that my conscience would never be completely in agreement, but I still felt that I would like to be an officer. What would be the end of all that?

In 1928 I entered the Normal School for Teachers at Besancon, and, like all my comrades, I began to take advanced military training (P.M.S.) to become a reserve officer. But my conscience would not rest, and after two or three months I discontinued it, under the pretext that my health was not very good and that my studies gave me enough to do. This was not the real reason, and you may consider me lacking in courage. But it was hard for me to have to say that I didn't like to do my military service, and I had not yet decided to refuse absolutely to bear arms. This was

all the more so because in several normal schools communist propaganda was strong and sought to divert the normal students from P.M.S., and I did not want to lead people to believe that I was a victim of that propaganda. Upon leaving the school, my comrades then became officers, and I envied them a little, I who would have been able to be one as well as they and to wear the beautiful uniform. . . .

At that time various pacifist movements were influencing opinion in our country, and I remember having actively participated in different meetings in behalf of peace. At school we were urged to give pacifist teaching; the old Latin precept "Si vis pacem, para bellum" (If you want peace, prepare for war) was fought energetically, and under the influence of men such as Briand (Aristide), Frenchmen were learning the opposite maxim, "If you want peace, prepare for peace." The horrors of war were denounced by educators, and truly with all my heart I associated myself with that campaign of pacifist propaganda. I did not wish at all to help in preparing for war by performing my military service. However, as a teacher I had to teach obedience to the laws of my country, and to be an example: I had to do my military service. Furthermore, in the course of the pacifist meetings, I had occasion to notice that certain parties were using the pacifist movement for their own propaganda, which was anything but pacifist. At Montbeliard, for example, in January, 1934, during a meeting in the municipal theater I intervened in order to brand those who were preaching class wars under the cover of pacifism, and I asserted my conviction that there is only one true pacifism, that of the Gospel, that of hearts to which peace has come through the Word of God and which are no longer inspired by hate, but by love. The room full of people, mostly educators, applauded that intervention. And many of my friends feared that this speech would bring me difficulties with the military authorities. But such was not the case.

In 1933 I had been deferred by the examining board. In 1934 I was to come before it again. At that time I was twenty-two years old, and I was thinking of setting up a home, feeling strongly that one should do so while young. The military service to be performed was for me a serious obstacle, a very annoying obstacle. When the president of the examining board spoke of deferring me again because of a "weak constitution," I declared that I had never been sick. He grumbled something unintelligible and then said aloud: "Good for the armed services!" The die was cast, and it was a

relief for me, for I disliked having to pass again as unfit for military service.

But when in the spring of 1935 I arrived at the barracks, I had fully made up my mind to do everything I could in order not to have to bear arms. I asked to speak to my officer, and I explained to him that I wanted to be a good citizen and to serve my country well, but that because of conscientious scruples, I did not wish to bear arms. I asked to serve as a nurse in the company made up of soldiers without rank. But he answered that if I wanted to serve my country well, I could do nothing better than to give an example of obedience and become an officer, as my capabilities bade me do. There was no other way for me. The examination that I had taken in order to enter regimental music (and the non-ranking company) revealed, moreover, that I did not have sufficient practice with the brass instruments to be useful immediately. I was to be registered in the preparatory course for student candidate reserve officers. I was very much distressed; I who had not wanted to take up military training to become an officer, was having to take the opposite road and become one. What was I to do?

I returned to my barracks room and fell to my knees to ask God to help me and to show me the way. Here I must candidly recognize if I analyze my feelings that in my desire of obedience to Christ I was certainly afraid of carrying it out very far. If I deliberately renounced becoming an officer, if I refused to follow the preparatory course, what would happen? I would immediately be regarded with disfavor, prohibited from continuing such a course of action, considered a communist and an antimilitarist, a bad Frenchman, and I would undoubtedly find it hard to continue in my profession. Beyond that, I was anxious for the esteem of men and for preserving my good reputation, and it was terribly painful for me to renounce these. Certainly I was evading the issue; I had not truly made up my mind to "obey God rather than men." And, because I have gone through that experience, I now have much sympathetic understanding for those who have to engage in this struggle against themselves and who do not succeed in conquering. I recognize that God exercised infinite patience with respect to me, and that He dealt with me with long-suffering. I cried out to Him for light, when in the final analysis I knew very well that He was calling me to a way of renunciation and of nonconformity to the world. But that way was too hard to follow; it was beyond my strength. I was still insufficiently prepared, and I did not know the

secret of life in Christ, the source of all strength and all victory. Counting on my own strength, I was vanquished beforehand.

But my Lord sustained me and without doubt seeing that I could not follow the wonderful and difficult way to which He was calling me, He allowed me to pass along another way. He gave me an answer. At that time, in my perplexities, in my hesitations and my doubts, I had the habit of opening at random the Word of God, asking the Lord to give me in this way the answer which I needed, a definite indication concerning what I was to do. The method is very debatable, and the interpretation of the answer received is always open to question; I know it now. But in my unbelief, or rather, in my inability to obey and follow the way clearly traced for every Christian by the Word of God, it was necessary for me to seek a loophole. And our God, who is truly a God of patience and kindness, permitted me to open my Bible to the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of John. My eyes fell on verse 15: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." I repeat that I now consider this method as very debatable and that I am not giving it as a pattern for anyone. I am not reporting all this as an argument in a discussion, but as a personal testimony as accurate as possible. That happened thus for me.

I was there, then, on my knees in my barracks room, in agony of mind, and I was to give an answer to my officer. When I read these words, this seemed to me an unexpected bit of luck: God was permitting me what I no longer believed that He would ever permit me. It was the Lord Jesus Himself who had prayed saying, "I pray thee not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil"! And I knew that page of the Word of God very well; I knew that the Lord Jesus had also said in that prayer, "They are not of the world, as I am not of the world." No, I did not feel myself as of this militaristic and wicked world, and I only wanted the Lord to preserve me from the evil in it, since He Himself consented to my living in it. I had always considered monastic life as an evasion of the responsibilities of the Christian life in the world, and I did not want to fall into the same trap by taking the attitude of a Christian "withdrawn from the world." Furthermore, I had read the fine book of Madame de Perrot, entitled, *A Christian Soldier: Raymond de Perrot,* and I saw its relationship to my boyhood dream: to become an officer, the fervent desire to be, like Raymond de Perrot, a Christian soldier. And here God was opening the way for me, the Lord was

praying to the Father for me: "I pray thee not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Instantaneously, I knew that I was going to answer yes to my officer.

A few days later I was admitted by the colonel, as an E.O.R. candidate, to the preparatory course which was being carried on in the regiment, and I changed barracks. I was then deliberately choosing to take a way that I had thought good to avoid seven years earlier in refusing to take advanced military training. And if I recall correctly, I felt a certain vexation of spirit, the feeling of having failed in my duty and of reversing my judgment. I could have been an officer for a long time like all my comrades; because of the principle involved I had not wanted to, and now I was changing my mind and was consenting to become one by the less glorious entrance—that for those who failed to pass the P.M.S. examination. It was disquieting. But after all, my boyhood dream, which I believe was also the dream of many of my relatives, was going to be fulfilled. For I had no doubts about my success.

It should be said here that I was not an extraordinary E.O.R. candidate—it would be very interesting to question my instructors on this matter now—but I easily gained the favor of my chief, I do not know why. I was, I believe, liked and appreciated by them perhaps still more for my exemplary conduct than for my abilities as a leader. Having a temperament suited to training men, I felt entirely at ease in the exercises of commanding, and that was an essential factor for success. I did not have to work exceedingly hard, as did many of my comrades—some of whom failed nevertheless —and I easily passed the examination at the end of the course, which opened to me the doors of the Military School of St. Maixent. It would have given me more prestige to have gained admission to St. Cyr, as had many of my former comrades from the Normal School; but so much the worse, my promotion led me to take my work at St. Maixent. There also everything moved along smoothly, and I was promoted to the rank of second lieutenant in the reserves in April, 1936. Called up for only a year of service by reason of my age-group classification, I was to return to my home at the end of this course; but that was the time when the Germans were reoccupying the Ruhr, and we were kept under the colors during the critical period, until May, 1936.

The situation kept getting worse until 1938; I was mobilized at the time of the Sudeten War, and it was thought that war was certainly ahead. Already during the periods of instruction that I

had to carry out meanwhile, I experienced a troublesome feeling of insecurity, of uneasiness, of great distress at the thought of war soon being inevitable and at the same time the thought that I, a Mennonite, was to be an officer, and that I would without doubt have to command the firing. I know all the arguments which can be invoked to justify my position, and which many do not fail to use. These sophisms did not satisfy me and could not still my troubled conscience. I felt myself a pilgrim and a stranger in this world, yet at the same time bound by enormous bonds to my country, my terrestrial home, bonds which I had neither the possibility nor the liberty to break. Besides, this was not the only problem that I had to solve; what I was experiencing as a teacher in the public school in the "mountain of the Doubs," where I was located with my company between 1936 and 1939, also worried me infinitely. There I did not have the liberty to bring that which I felt indispensable to all these youths with whom I was working: the Gospel of Jesus Christ, my Saviour, the only name given to man whereby they may be saved, the only way of salvation for these young lives. What could I do? Often I wept in the evening after a harassing day of classes and the adult course or the meeting of the "Amicale d'Anciens Elèves de l'Ecole." And it is with these feelings, with this uncertainty, with these unsolved problems that I lived until the war. Then began another chapter of my life and experience.

August, 1939. The mobilization of the people living along the border. The anxiety of waiting: will there be another Munich? No, that is not possible another time. Everyone feels it, this time; the governments of the West cannot give way again. September comes on the wave of anxiety, bringing with it the war.

I am in Alsace, at the end of the Maginot Line, and we are working hard to put into good condition whatever part of the front we can. The Rhine is there in front of us, an imposing, but insufficient barrier. Already people speak of an eventual attack with gas. Certainly we are not attacking, and if we are here, it is only in position of defense. My uneasy conscience tries to satisfy itself with this truth: we are not the aggressors; we are taking up arms solely to come to the aid of the small nations eaten up by the monster, and to prevent any eventual aggression against our own country.

But there is a sight which torments me exceedingly; it is that of the evacuation of the Alsatian population. In reality, a zone of about ten kilometers all along the border must be immediately and completely evacuated by order of the military authority, in order

to avoid having the inhabitants find themselves under fire in case the Germans would attack. And, absolutely powerless, I witness the heart-rending spectacle of the exodus. Unforgettable memory! Oh, the mournful passing by of these thousands and thousands of people carrying along—to live who knows where, who knows how long—what is absolutely necessary, thirty kilos of baggage per person. Oh, the distressing sight of these mothers and these children, departing with the old people—the men are mobilized—obliged to leave everything, to tear themselves away from the past, from the beloved house, from home, because of war!

Oh, how I should like to be able to help them, to show them a little kindness! But what can I do? I am an officer, and I do not have the time to look after them. However, I feel myself made more for such work than for the work of a soldier. And it appears to me to be just as necessary to care for these people as to use up my strength to find suitable sites for my part of the mortars, which must constantly be changed for absolutely incomprehensible reasons. It seems to me much more desirable to devote my strength to the work of love and peace than to the preparation of positions for war which will perhaps never serve any purpose. (This conjecture will eventually prove to be correct.) There are enough others who respond to the call of violence. And I feel like a stranger among them. . . .

During this entire period of the war, the winter of 1939-40, I suffer intensely as I discover the lack of constraint of so many soldiers, against which the high command struggles without much efficiency. The alcoholism of the army deeply distresses me. The indecision of the leaders worries me. I have the impression that an inevitable catastrophe is in the making; and when I unburden my heart to my captain he threatens me, half-seriously and half-jokingly, with a court-martial. However, I have the conviction that "all is not well." And the periods of instruction which I have occasion to carry on in various places confirms me in my impression. How I should like to work in a labor of peace!

But May 10, 1940, arrives, bringing the brutal aerial attack of the Germans on Holland, Belgium, and France. Upon first hearing the news by radio (I am at this time at Valdahon and have come to spend the night at home), I am horrified and struck with consternation at the same time.

Several days afterwards I am in Alsace at the border of the Rhine in the Haardt forest. In the morning the planes pass again in successive waves high overhead. It is absolutely useless to fire on

them with our infantry weapons. But I am suddenly seized with an intense feeling of revolt: they are not attacking us, the soldiers, the people prepared to fight, but our wives, our children, our parents, our friends, our villages, our schools, our homes. . . . And I, too, want to do something to prevent them from doing it. I seize the machine gun, in firing position on its picket; I take aim; I fire. . . . I pull, but the charge does not go off; the weapon locks; it is impossible to fire with this machine gun. And there I am, my feeling of revolt in my heart, and my useless weapon in my hands. God is speaking to me. It is not given to me to use these weapons of war to accomplish justice according to the opinion of men.

Six months later, during the last days of the French campaign, I am taken prisoner with the whole army. What a disaster! And for five years I shall experience being in captivity. Five years a prisoner! In 1935 I was afraid of going to prison; I shrank in the face of this prospect; I did not accept this dishonor entailed in loving Christ and remaining faithful to the Gospel. And now I do not have the choice: I am a prisoner, and am going to be one for a long time. I shall have all the time to meditate on my situation, my conduct, and the teachings of the Word of God.

For five years in the midst of distress, I am going to have the opportunity to proclaim Jesus Christ to my comrades in misfortune. Quickly our life is organized. In July we have our first religious service, during which I give testimony to my Saviour. This testimony is received by several who later also accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Throughout the entire period of captivity I have the joy, either alone or with various other pastors, of bringing several comrades into the knowledge of the Gospel. What a happiness to be able, even in the midst of adversity, to lead souls to Jesus Christ and to realize daily that He is living, faithful, and powerful. And in this work I feel perfectly in my place, in the place where God wants me. My conviction becomes firm and definite: I am, and want to be, nothing other than a disciple of Jesus Christ and His Gospel of peace.

Little by little I see clearly and I understand that my position as a Christian, as a child of God, makes it necessary for me to be only a stranger and a pilgrim on earth. I am no longer to take arms to defend by my own power a terrestrial country to which I am however bound, but to which I have other duties. I am not to receive my orders from a general staff, but from my Lord and His Word. Properly speaking, I am not a citizen of the earth, but a citizen of heaven. And I am not to follow the profession of bear-

ing arms, so unmistakably in contradiction with that Word, but rather to be a minister of love and consolation in the name of Christ. That must be my manner of being a good citizen.

At a time when one speaks about totalitarianism in other countries, I am astonished that no one notices how totalitarian we have been in France for a long time, since no exception is permitted and every male citizen must sacrifice to the god of war, even against his conscience. I am astonished that the churches, all the churches, even mine, have heartily accepted that, and find it natural and good. Oh, Christian churches, what responsibility will be yours, and at what a loss you will be at the time when you will have to give an account! Have you not accepted with a willing heart the rule of Mars over you instead of the rule of Christ and His Word? Have you not professed in word that you are disciples of Christ and in deed accepted all the human doctrines concerning the position of man on the earth? Do you not accept taking up arms to defend an earthly country simply because it is a human concept and because you do not have faith in God and do not believe Him capable of using other means to protect your earthly inheritance? Have you not till now pretended to believe every war a holy one in order to justify your position, and given your blessing to all the conquerors of the earth? Oh, Christian churches, are you in reality Christian?

When I read the Word: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16), or: "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21), or again: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world" (I John 4:17), I am obliged, either to renounce being a Christian such as God desires, or to conform my conduct to these truths in order to be truly Christian. And I do not see how I could be like Christ in the world and follow His steps while carrying a weapon of war and killing any one. But I remember His Word: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). And here I have come to the foolishness of the cross, incomprehensible to the world, unacceptable to so many people who call themselves Christians, but which is the power of God. It is understood that in choosing this foolishness, I am condemned in advance by the world. But I prefer to be on the side of God, not in order to be saved by my good works, but because He has saved me by grace, redeemed me at great price in order that I might belong

to Him and be a child of peace in the world, a disciple of the Prince of Peace, and not a servant of Mars.

Prompted by loyalty, I tried to be a child of peace with weapons in my hand, not for attacking other people, but for defending my own. And I did not succeed. Now I want to count on God and leave to Him the care of defending us, my people and myself, as He has promised. Besides, He also says in His Word: "Be not righteous over much: neither make thyself over wise" (Ecclesiastes 7:16), and that is why I am ready to accept for the service of my country any task to which my conscience can give consent, any task in which any man of good will can recognize that in it a disciple of Jesus Christ is in his place, any task for which I can be sure of the approval of God. II Timothy 2:15.

September, 1948.

WHITHER CHRISTIAN PACIFISM?

DON E. SMUCKER

I. Origin of the Fellowship of Reconciliation

During the last days of 1914 the Fellowship of Reconciliation was founded at Cambridge University with the following statement of purpose:

1. That Love as revealed and interpreted in the life and death of Jesus Christ involves more than we have yet seen, that it is the only power by which evil can be overcome, and the only sufficient basis of human society.
2. That, in order to establish a world-order based on Love, it is incumbent upon those who believe in this principle to accept it fully, both for themselves and in their relation with others, and to take the risks involved in doing so in a world which does not yet accept it.
3. That, therefore, as Christians we are forbidden to wage war; and that our loyalty to our country, to humanity, to the Church Universal, and to Jesus Christ our Lord and Master, calls us instead to a life-service for the enthronement of Love in personal, social, commercial, and national life.
4. That the Power, Wisdom, and Love of God stretch far beyond the limits of our present experience, and that He is ever waiting to break forth into human life in new and larger ways.
5. That since God manifests Himself in the world through men and women, we offer ourselves to Him for His redemptive purpose, to be used by Him in whatever way He may reveal us.

Among the leaders of this group were Henry T. Hodgkins, Lucy Gardner, Joan Mary Fry, W. E. Orchard, and Richard Roberts. Then on November 11, 12, 1915, the American F.O.R. was organized at Garden City, N.Y., with Gilbert Beaver, Edward Evans, and Charles J. Rhoads as leaders.

It is clear that the F.O.R. was started in the context of the Christian Church (by way of liberal Protestantism) as a movement of Christian witness asknowledging the lordship of Jesus Christ.

II. Development

Ray Abrams in *Preachers Present Arms* shows that there were only a handful of ministers outside the historic peace churches who

maintained a clear-cut pacifist witness during World War I. In the disillusionments of the twenties and thirties the Fellowship led the pacifist crusade which swept across the countries. It was now clear that the tiny minority of the 1914-18 era was to be replaced by a first-class minority and perhaps a majority. In the *World Tomorrow* Kirby Page published in 1934 the replies of 20,870 clergymen on war and economic injustice. Nearly 13,000 or 62 per cent took the pacifist position and 28 per cent voted for outright socialism; 51 per cent favored a drastically reformed capitalism. In the light of this, pacifism had actually attained a majority in the Protestant ministry (ministry, *not* laity) of America.

This development here and in Great Britain and in a smaller way in twenty-five other countries led to the defensible observation that there is more Christian pacifism in the church than at any other time since the apostolic church.

As we have said, Kirby Page's questionnaire was published in 1934. Coincident with this was the rising fascist movement in Germany. The Nye munitions investigation ran from September 4, 1934, to March 1, 1935. These shocking revelations on the international basis of war-making gave popular pacifism a shot in the arm and laid the basis for the neutrality legislation which was destined to be scuttled and sabotaged. Meanwhile the Nazi movement gained momentum with its daily impact on pacifism. The change in the church was so marked that the *Christian Century* ran a series of articles between December 4, 1940, and February 5, 1941, called "If America Enters the War—What Shall I Do?" Conspicuous among those pledged to support the war was Reinhold Niebuhr, former chairman of the Fellowship. The interventionist movement was being led by ex-pacifists—even Sherwood Eddy changed his position during this period.

Unfortunately, most pacifists viewed the Keep America Out of War movements as essentially valid even when mixed with dubious isolationist elements. Niebuhr waged theological war unmercifully against this sort of relativism in pacifist ethics. In any case the isolationist movement was strong enough to stave off a declaration short of actual invasion or attack. This took place at Pearl Harbor. Overnight most of the isolationists climbed on board the ship of war. What they really meant was, "We will never go to war UNLESS ATTACKED."

From 1939 the membership of the F.O.R. increased fifty per cent as unorganized conscientious objectors registered their convictions. Thus, a paradox emerged: the Fellowship grew numerically

as pacifism generally ceased to hold its slight majority among Protestant clergymen. But it remained a sturdy minority.

III. World War II

The pacifist leaven brought about several changes in the life of the church during the war.

First, it virtually destroyed the "preachers present arms" hysteria of World War I. The second World War was not a crusade, not a time to put Christ in khaki, not a time to take a carnal delight in killing. In fact, the bewildered Protestant soldier hardly had any basis for fighting: it was a grim necessity, a dirty job to be done.

Second, isolationism was rejected by the main-line Protestant churches at the Delaware conference of 1942. Subsequent conferences at Cleveland were destined to fall below even these modest achievements.

Third, the Protestant community through the Calhoun commission and the *Christian Century* declared that "the church is not at war." The point was overly neat since *in fact* most churches left the impression that they were backing up the boys with religious sanctions of some kind.

Meanwhile, the anti-pacifist front was actually gaining inner security and so a separate section will be devoted to it.

IV. The Anti-Pacifist Front

A. Charles Clayton Morrison: *dualism and determinism.* His position called for a radical dualism between peace and war plus the deterministic involvement in war once it comes. Thus, the pacifist tasks are to prevent war. Once it comes this is the failure which forces everyone into the bitter fruit of failure. During peace, however, one can wage peace. Far more than Niebuhr, Morrison rationalized the second World War for main-line Protestantism. This was the unnecessary necessity.

The refutation of this position requires the pacifist to show how moral decisions are essentially the same in peace and war. And, to show that confession of guilt on the part of the pacifist does not force him to relinquish the moral freedom still left under wartime conditions.

B. Reinhold Niebuhr: *realism and relativity.* According to C. H. C. MacGregor in his study of Niebuhr, "The Relevance of an Impossible Ideal," the latter makes a threefold indictment of pacifism.

1. Pacifism is built on a false optimism because it believes that "man is essentially good at some level of his being and has rejected the Christian doctrine of original sin." Moreover, pacifism denies the reality of evil in order to maintain its hope in the triumph of the ideal of love in the world. Hence, the baseless optimism which interprets world history "as a gradual ascent to the kingdom of God which awaits for final triumph only upon the willingness of Christians to take Christ seriously."

2. Pacifism has the wrong conception of method. On the one hand, it overestimates the response to pure nonresistance, making a success story out of the cross; or, on the other hand, it perverts the pure nonresistant ethic of the New Testament with nonviolent resistance. Thus it compounds the perfectionist teaching of the cross with the pragmatic, coercionist ethic of nonviolent resistance.

3. Pacifists isolate the issue of war to the exclusion of many other moral issues also stressed by Christ and the Gospel of Christ generally.

Niebuhr's influence is growing and especially in the theological seminaries. To refute Niebuhr it is not necessary to prove that Jesus was a pacifist or that the New Testament ethic is a love ethic. Rather, one will have to do two things:

First, the pacifist must show that depraved human nature can be forgiven and empowered through the grace of God in Jesus Christ; and that the Holy Spirit is active within the fellowship of the church, strengthening the Christian in his struggles against sin. In other words, that sanctification is possible; that one can truly be a Christian.

Second, one will have to show that the ethic of Jesus is not wholly transcendent and perfectionist, that it is paradoxically transcendent yet applicable to the here and now; and that though the kingdom is future it is also now present in Christ.

A large proportion of New Testament scholars and theologians generally rest their case on this last point: that Jesus did not emphasize the exercise of political and military power because He expected the world to end soon. And, so the argument runs, since the world is still with us we must embrace power even in its violent form. In other words, Jesus did not envisage what we now know to be the case. This is exactly the argument used by John Knox in his Walgreen Lecture at Chicago in 1942 published in the symposium, *Religion and the Present Crisis*. See especially pp. 40-42. Thus part of Niebuhr's argument is supported in slightly different fashion by

those who seek to destroy the obvious meaning of the Sermon on the Mount.

C. Bishop Oxnam: *evolutionary ethics.* Oxnam is a genuine liberal Protestant with social gospel concerns who is not at home in many of Niebuhr's categories. This argument says that pacifism is premature historically. War is justified now. But we must build a world order of law and justice in which pacifism will be possible—tomorrow, perhaps. This is a favorite liberal rejection of pacifism, a tentative rejection which looks for deliverance within history.

D. Martin Luther: *church and state dualism.* Protestant orthodoxy generally, both fundamental and main-line, takes this way out. The basic distinction is between murder and killing, the latter permitted in legitimate warfare. The Sermon on the Mount applies in personal relationships. But when one is serving the government as a citizen the Sermon on the Mount must go. Romans 13:1 would be the Scriptural locus of this position.

To answer it one must deal with the Biblical conception of government, the status of police power and the difference between war and police power.

E. Roman church: *the just and unjust war.* Under certain conditions wars are permitted; under other conditions, not so. Nevin Sayre said this position was fading out at Amsterdam only to be replaced by the lesser-of-two-evils theory. Catholic conscientious objectors take the position that all modern wars are unjust even though they must concede in theory that under stated conditions war could be just and therefore ethical.

F. National necessity: *self-preservation.* Pacifism is dangerous because it leaves the country open to dictatorship and cruel totalitarianism. Thus it is a form of treason or betrayal. On this point almost all politicians, left, center, and right, agree. The man on the street would know this one better than any other. Its inner heartbeat is fear!

Serious thinking on these matters is needed. The simple pacifist truth is that love has no qualifications in the teachings of Jesus; no limits because of class, race, time, or space. Love is always right. War always wrong. But more on this later.

V. The Church Today

Recently Christian leaders from forty-two countries sought to describe the state of the church in their nation. These reports were edited by Henry Smith Leiper in the book, *Christianity Today,*

Morehouse-Goreham, 1947. Walter Marshall Horton writes the article on this country. He notes four characteristics of the church today:

1. *More unified and more ecumenical.*

Here it is important to note that, broadly speaking, the ecumenical movement operates in the framework of Christian orthodoxy. To be sure, there are groups too conservative and groups too liberal for the movement. (Jesus Christ is God and Saviour—the minimum creedal formula.) The conservative groups are the fundamentalists and the various sects and cults. These ultraconservative groups, please note, are still producing by far the largest number of conscientious objectors. This is true primarily because the Mennonites, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Seventh-Day Adventists stand to the right of the ecumenical movement. Unitarians, Universalists and many other liberal groups cannot accept this orthodox Christological formula. Yet the ecumenical movement is unquestionably a major emphasis within non-Roman Christianity of our time. No pacifist strategy could possibly ignore it. And, be it noted, conscientious objection was recognized at Amsterdam as a valid Christian position among others.

2. *More group leadership and less dominance by a few great leaders.*

More and more, non-Roman Christianity is learning how to formulate its thinking through conferences and committees. This is a hindrance to Christian pacifism which tends to operate in true prophetic fashion by way of voices crying in the wilderness. In the twenties and thirties the roving, unattached pacifist prophets like Kirby Page, Sherwood Eddy, and Norman Thomas were quite typical. Today the pacifist witness must register more through a group-thinking process.

3. *More Biblical and doctrinal, less emotional and activist in methods of propagating the Gospel.*

The contempt for theology and the Bible in the American churches is slowly but surely giving way to a more Biblical and doctrinal approach. The American activism has not collapsed but a meeting is taking place with European Christianity which is adding activism to its theology just as we are adding more theology to our actvism.

4. *Facing a more radically secularized and perilous situation and more deeply conscious of the need of radical religious renewal than a generation ago.*

Today there is much talk about predicament, crisis, atomic agony, making the Christian cause more urgent. As yet this is fairly vague in actual content but it could well be receptive to a reconstructed nonresistant Christianity.

Horton concludes his analysis by suggesting that today we have a new liberalism and new orthodoxy. About this he observes: "The new liberalism can converse and collaborate with the new orthodoxy as modernism could not with fundamentalism. In such collaboration and conversation between: (a) Christians concerned to preserve the purity of the Word of God; and (b) Christians concerned to apply the Word of God to daily life, the hope of our churches principally lies in these great and difficult days."

Apart from Walter Horton, the following observation can be made: the church is essentially powerless politically. Kirby Page once said that his major mistake was to overestimate the political power of the churches in relation to issues of peace. I do not here refer to the Roman church which *is* powerful politically. I refer to Protestantism as an unorganized group. Whatever its leaders think, there is no guarantee of delivering the strength of its laity. Meanwhile, Karl Barth has arisen to question whether the church should enter the political realm at all in any direct sense. Conservative Protestantism has, of course, held this view for many years. Hence while there is debate on the desirability of politics, there is no doubt that the church is, in fact, without any substantial influence in politics.

Finally, a deep feeling has come to the church that the peace has been lost. This confusion was dramatically confirmed by the recent Cleveland conference where the Protestant people sought to develop its new realism which is a moralistic support of the general outlines of the State Department policy. Nothing in years has brought forth louder laments and more tragic tears than the recent Cleveland conference. At this point the church has hopelessly scrambled spiritual and political power.

Thus, new life stirs in the church as it seeks deeper roots for its faith and life; along with this is disillusionment, despair, and a naive attempt to be realistic. Thus far, pacifism is playing no clear or decisive role in these matters. The pacifist churchmen are stopped by the dilemma of whether to protest loudly and probably be driven to the very edge of the ecumenical movement, if not driven out; or

whether to watch with tearful eyes the inexorable logic of the new realism as it prepares for World War III—and perhaps the end of Western civilization.

VI. Lessons from the C.P.S. Era

1. *Statistical*: There was one C.O. for every 1,000 men in the army. Or, one tenth of one per cent of the men were C.O.'s.

2. *Center of strength*: The historic peace churches, especially the Mennonites, still supplied the overwhelming majority of C.O.'s. But the fact that the Methodists sent forth more than the Quakers suggested the new status of Protestant pacifism. Conscientious objection cut through every type of religious, racial, cultural, and philosophical background.

3. *Disunity*: Everyone overestimated the unity of conscientious objectors. This was a least common denominator for radically differing views of religion, politics, social and personal morals, and a host of other things.

4. *Conscription*: The activists who were friendly to political action discovered their deep hostility to conscription while the more nonpolitical C.O.'s had their first experience in a fairly satisfactory encounter with government.

5. *Discipline*: The inability to find a basis for discipline suggested that pacifism was still an essentially individualist doctrine without a doctrine of the church or community.

6. *New movements*: Essentially out of C.P.S. by way of protest has come the new Peacemakers organization and the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors. The major fruit of the pro-C.P.S. party was the Mental Health Foundation and the concept of voluntary service projects.

Because the majority, however slight, strongly feels that C.P.S. gave pacifism direct, functional relationship to dozens of needs in American life there will be adequate support for something similar in the event C.O.'s are drafted again.

Religiously speaking, C.P.S. made C.O.'s more humble and teachable with fairly wide assent to the observation of Gerald Heard: "Physician, heal thyself."

VII. Self-criticism by Pacifists

Consider several examples of this very important process of self-criticism.

A. From the British F.O.R. magazine, *Reconciliation,* March, 1948, an article by John Ferguson: He suggests four parts of our failure:

1. We failed before the war in presenting to the world a message of cloudy optimism.
2. We confused a vague ethical humanism with the way of Christ.
3. We oversimplified the problem before us.
4. We failed, as we are still failing, to bring any comfort to a dying world.

"We have failed, but yet we believe that we have glimpsed the truth."

B. Franklin H. Littell, former chairman of the Youth Committee Against War, the united front organization of pacifists and near-pacifists, writing in Niebuhr's quarterly *Christianity and Society,* Vol. II, No. 2 under the title, "The Inadequacy of Modern Pacifism."

1. Gandhian nonviolence, quoting K. Shridharani, has more in common with war than Western pacifism. It is a realistic strategy though not Christian.
2. Modern pacifism represents an unsound view of the world, of history and human nature, believing that violence and conflict can be driven out of social life.
3. Modern pacifists share with other liberal Christians a naive faith in social progress through "education."
4. Modern pacifists fail to distinguish between what they expect of their own members and what they expect of the world at large.
5. Modern pacifism has been unable to attain an effective discipline within its own ranks.
6. Modern pacifism is unable to develop a coherent and planned program of action.
7. Conclusion: Accept either genuine Biblical nonresistance or revolutionary nonviolent direct action since these have discipline and integrity. Reject modern pacifism.

C. The late C. J. Cadoux, English authority on the early church, in his book *Christian Pacifism Re-examined.* To Cadoux

the real problem is "what form or forms of pressure it is ethically legitimate for a Christian man to use, in his individual and also his corporate capacity, as a means of causing others to act in ways which he deems essential to their own and to the general welfare." He goes on to distinguish between coercive and noncoercive pressures and has a remarkable chart for all this. His is a desperate attempt to avoid the either-or of Littell and find a middle ground with strong concessions to both pacifist and nonpacifist criticisms.

Three pacifist points remain unanswered, according to Cadoux:

1. that the activities of fighting men cannot be harmonized with any standard of conduct reasonably described as Christian.
2. that war inevitably tends to lead on to further war, or to worse war.
3. that the Christian ethic definitely inculcates on its adherents the policy of overcoming evil with good, and of making the sacrifices incidental to any temporary failure in doing so.

D. Elton Trueblood and *vocational pacifism* in the *Atlantic Monthly,* December, 1940.

Here one admits the limitations of pacifism for national policy and denies, in effect, its universal validity. Yet, the vocationalist affirms that as a matter of personal vocational guidance he can do no other. This is a radical doctrine of conscience yoked to individualism, mysticism, and pacifism.

E. Biblical nonresistance as in Guy Hershberger's *War, Peace, and Nonresistance.*

1. The nature of peace. Individually it is based on salvation through Christ; socially it is found in the Christian brotherhood; nationally and internationally it waits on the second coming of Christ.
2. War will not disappear from history until the total coming of the kingdom. Today it continues to be one of the most constant and distinctive factors of history.
3. There is a continuity to Christian pacifism but, significantly, it has always remained a remnant or minority, albeit a creative one.
4. The Sermon on the Mount requires us to break with all coercion including that of the army, the police, the strike, the strikebreaker, and the law court.

5. The basic function of the state is police-power rather than welfare.
6. Our emphasis must be on missions, education, medicine, and noncoercive social work.

F. Contemplative pacifism as seen in Gerald Heard and Aldous Huxley.

1. Most political and social action doesn't do any good.
2. The prerequisite to all redemptive action is meditation and prayer.
3. The way out is a combination of mysticism in religion, pacifism in ethics, decentralism in economics and politics.

G. Peacemakers.

1. The old peace movement has failed.
2. The time has come for a radical break with the war system.
3. It must be replaced by nonviolent direct action and particularly by non-co-operation with registration and draft and the paying of income tax.
4. These measures must be followed regardless of consequences.

VIII. Implications for the Future

By way of summary we have seen the following:

1. The Fellowship of Reconciliation was started as an explicitly Christian movement based on the love revealed in the life and death of Christ.

2. The remarkable growth of pacifism after World War I probably reaching in 1934 a slight majority of Protestant ministers. This very likely was the largest development of Christian pacifist sentiment since the apostolic church.

3. The loss of numerous pacifists following the rise of German fascism.

4. The failure to prevent the outbreak of war or America's entry into war and some of the dubious isolationist aspects of this attempt.

5. The growth of the F.O.R. since 1939 despite the decrease in the number of pacifists.

6. The restraining effect of pacifism during World War II which destroyed the wilder excesses of 1914-18.

7. Nonetheless, the growth in vigor and inner security of the anti-pacifist front. Particularly the dualism and determinism of Morrison and the realism and relativity of Niebuhr. The latter position focusing on the terrible reality of sin and the transcendent character of the teachings of Jesus.

8. The new developments in the church toward ecumenical life based on orthodox theology, group thinking in conferences, emphasis on the Bible and doctrine, a new sense of urgency, and the greater possibility of communication between the new liberalism and the new orthodoxy.

9. The political powerlessness of Protestantism and its recent display of what is Niebuhr-in-the-hands-of-ordinary-men at Cleveland; spiritual and political power are scrambled and the State Department is sanctified.

10. The growing weakness of pacifism in relation to basic decisions in either church or state.

11. The inner dilemmas of pacifism in the light of this.

12. The very tiny but vigorous group of C.O.'s in the second World War, their acute disunity, their deep failure and sturdy triumphs. In the latter case, particularly the opening up of a new conception of functional service; and the new separatist feeling of the so-called absolutists.

13. The amazing self-criticism of pacifism by pacifists much of which agrees with parts of Niebuhr's criticism; and yet the diversity of this criticism from various perspectives. Cumulatively, it tends to push toward two polarities: nonviolent direct action or a more conservative Biblical nonresistance, both of which include vigorous discipline.

IX. Implications for Mennonites

This survey appears to confirm some of the deepest convictions of the Mennonite Church regarding Biblical nonresistance. Indeed, it is remarkable how historical experience allows for every conceivable thrust of freedom; and yet, in the long view, Biblical truth remains resilient and powerful. In this case, the peace movement moved in many daring new directions, launched many new experiments. None of these, however, has destroyed Biblical nonresistance. On the other hand, the paper shows the universality of the love ethic among a minority of Christian people everywhere. It makes more important than ever a genuine interaction between the Mennonite peace advocates and all other Christians seeking to know, above everything else, what is really true about war and peace in the light of Jesus Christ and Holy Scripture. This conversation within the Christian community is likely to be the greatest opportunity of the heirs of Anabaptism since the sixteenth century. Fifty years of missions, education, catastrophe, theological reconstruction, and global shrinkage have prepared the Mennonite community for this task.

Must Christians Fight: A Scriptural Inquiry, By Edward Yoder in collaboration with Jesse W. Hoover and Harold S. Bender. Published by the Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pennsylvania, 1943. Pp. 68. $ .25.

The Christian and Conscription: An Inquiry Designed as a Preface to Action, By Edward Yoder and Don Smucker. Published by the Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pennsylvania, 1945. Pp. 124. $ .25.

The Power of Love, Edited and Compiled by the Peace Committee of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America. Published by the Board of Publication, Newton, Kansas, 1947. Pp. 136.

In a day when the corrosive influence of the modern philosophy of expediency has already made telling inroads upon the American Mennonite mind, this trilogy of treatises declaring and defending the historic doctrine of nonresistance should have a salubrious effect upon Mennonite readers. In fact, if the fundamental thesis of these writings is correct, nonresistance is no peculiarly "Mennonite" doctrine, but belongs to all of Christendom and thus these booklets should have an influence far beyond the Mennonite circles for whom they were primarily intended.

The three booklets are similar in their brevity, in format, and in basic content. All deal with the doctrine of nonresistance. Moreover, they are strikingly similar in the ways they were produced. Instead of presenting merely the thinking of single individuals on the subject, they are the products of the collaboration of properly constituted and representative Mennonite groups. The editorial committee for *Must Christians Fight* included representatives of various groups who co-operate with the Mennonite Central Committee. It is stated that the final manuscript "was approved by a large number of leading bishops, preachers, and Bible teachers from all branches of the Mennonite Church and the Brethren in Christ" (p. 8). At least three conferences were represented in the editing of *The Christian and Conscription,* while *The Power of Love* was produced by representative members of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America. Those who know something about Mennonite individualism will agree that the production of any booklet on so vital a subject under the above editorial arrangement is an accomplishment of no small dimensions. Perhaps the production of these booklets also speaks of the fundamental unity among Mennonite leaders of various conferences on their historic peace principles.

While similar, these booklets do not duplicate each other. They differ considerably in specific purpose and plan. *Must Christians Fight* is primarily an answer to attacks upon Biblical nonresistance coming from so-called "fundamentalist" circles which have had a confusing influence upon many Mennonites. In arrangement, it attempts to answer fifty-six questions concerning nonresistance which "were derived from a careful digest of all the available published material treating the theme, over forty publications having been used for this purpose" (p. 8). The answers are written in concise and simple form so as to be easily intelligible to the lay reader.

The Christian and Conscription is, in part, an attempt to answer various criticisms of the Mennonite policy of co-operating with the state in the administration of Civilian Public Service during World War II. These charges, coming largely from liberal pacifists, called for a new study of the Christian's attitude toward any form of conscription. The first part of the booklet, presenting the Biblical background of the subject with a history and critique of conscription, is a worthy final contribution of the pro-

ductive and persuasive pen of scholarly and devout Edward Yoder who died in March, 1945, before the final publication of the booklet. The second part, written by Don Smucker in his own arresting and pungent style is a rather penetrating evaluation of the entire Civilian Public Service program and a courageous and stimulating attempt to shed light on the bristling post-C.P.S. problem, "Where do we go from here?"

Recognizing that for many young Mennonites the critical period for decision on the issue of militarism is the high school age, *The Power of Love* purports to give guidance to this age group and is described as "A Study Manual Adapted for Sunday School Use and Group Discussion." This design is carried out in the four main divisions of the booklet each of which has three parts with discussion questions and suggested readings at the end of each part. The first section, written by Walter H. Dyck, Executive Secretary of the General Conference of the Mennonites of North America, lucidly and simply presents the Scriptural basis of the nonresistant position. Written by the late veteran Mennonite historian, C. Henry Smith, the second division traces the historical background and development. J. Winfield Fretz, Associate Professor of Sociology at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, wrote the third part, giving an excellent summary of the Mennonite witness of nonresistance during World War II, replete with illustrations and based upon a careful survey. "Living the Peace Testimony" is the title of the final section, written by Russel Mast, a member of the General Conference Peace Committee. The "power of love" must first be a personal inner experience and must then be applied to personal and larger social relationships.

While all three booklets agree that the practice of nonresistance is to be taken seriously by the Christian, there is some variance among the writers in their eschatological presuppositions and their consequent conception concerning the degree and manner in which the nonresistant Christian should seek to influence the policy of governments. Yoder in *Must Christians Fight?* flatly declares that "the Church's task is not that of world reform" (p. 64), but evangelism, and that, therefore, Christians "do not engage in political activity and in propaganda aimed primarily at making a better society and a better world" (p. 65). Mast, in *The Power of Love*, on the other hand, holds that it is a part of a Christian's duty to see that his attitudes and opinions find expression in the affairs of government, hoping that "by silently infusing a new spirit in the total range of human life and experience" we can "slowly transform the policies and attitudes of our world" (p. 115). While many may question this optimism concerning a gradual redemption of the social order, it is probably in place to observe that the church's primary task of evangelism and a concern for social betterment are not necessarily mutually exclusive concepts.

Some serious students will find difficulty with Yoder's somewhat naturalistic explanation of the ordination of the state (*Must Christians Fight?* p. 43) while others may question the disposition which is made of the problems arising in the Old Testament. The reviewer believes that a constructive approach has been made. *The Christian and Conscription* might have been strengthened by a listing of bibliographical material such as appears in the other booklets. The appendices in all three booklets are helpful. While these publications are mainly intended for the lay reader, serious scholars should also be acquainted with these three additions to Mennonite literature on an increasingly vital subject.

Bethel College Erland Waltner

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